BLAKE'S VISION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

A STUDY

BY JOSEPH WICKSTEED

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BLAKE'S VISION
OF
THE BOOK OF JOB

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BLAKE'S VISION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

WITH REPRODUCTIONS OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS

A STUDY

BY

JOSEPH H. WICKSTEED
M.A.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

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"When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter
Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)"

TO · THE · MEMORY · OF
MY · FRIEND · BENJAMIN · KIRKMAN · GRAY
AND · IN · REVERENT · GRATITUDE
TO · THOSE · SONS · OF · ALBION · WHO · DIED
THAT · ALBIONS · SOUL
MIGHT · LIVE

"Fear not, Albion: unless I die thou canst not live"

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ON THE REPRODUCTIONS

The reproductions in this book are slightly reduced, the originals being somewhat large for a book intended to be held in the hand and read. They make no pretensions to take the place of Blake's own engravings, which are to be seen in the British Museum and in many private collections. But great pains have been taken to make them a worthy introduction to the study of Blake's poetic designs as used to express the universal ideas he found typified in the incidents of Job's story.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REFERENCE TO BLAKE'S WORKS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

Except where otherwise stated, quotations and references in the present work are taken from the originals or from lithographic facsimiles. For the convenience of readers references to works left by Blake in MS. are given to the most reliable and accessible transcriptions. Quotations from "The Four Zoas" are from the MS., but references are also given to Mr Ellis's free transcription called "Vala" in the Chatto & Windus edition. Blake's spelling and, where at all possible, his punctuation have been followed.

"S. I."	—"Songs of Innocence," dated 1789.
"Thel."	—"The Book of Thel," dated 1789.
"M. H. H."	—"The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," supposed date 1790 (*vide* Sampson, p. 332). Damon thinks *c.* 1793 (p. 96).
"America."	—"America, a Prophecy," dated 1793.
"S. E."	—"Songs of Experience," dated 1794.
"Europe."	—"Europe, a Prophecy," dated 1794.
"Urizen."	—"The Book of Urizen," dated 1794.
"Bk. of Los."	—"The Book of Los," dated 1795.
"F. Z."	—"The Four Zoas," MS. (in the British Museum) dated 1797.
"Vala."	—Mr Ellis's version of "F. Z.," in the Chatto & Windus "Poetical Works," 1906.
"M^{n}."	—"Milton, a Poem in 2 Books,"[1] dated 1804.
"J^{m}."	—"Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion," dated 1804, but completed probably *circa* 1818 (*vide* Russell, p. 223, note).
"Laocoon."	—Sentences engraved by Blake round his plate of the Laocoon statue (Sampson, p. 343, gives date as "*circa* 1816-20"). Reproduced Keynes' and E. Y., iii.; Transcriptions, Chatto & Windus, "Poetical Works," i. pp. 433-6; and Sampson, 1913, pp. 428 *ff.*

[1] Not "twelve," as on title-page, as reproduced in the Quaritch edition. *Vide* British Museum copy and reproduction in Oxford Blake (Sampson, 1913).

"N. N. R." —Engraved booklet entitled "There is No Natural Religion" (*vide* Sampson, 1913, p. 425).

"A. R. O." —Engraved booklet recently in Linnell Collection. It was known by the same title as above until Dr Sampson in the Oxford Blake 1913 restored what was doubtless its original title "All Religions are One." Transcribed E. Y. iii. and Sampson 1913. Both booklets are now dated by him as probably about 1788. (Sampson, 1913, p. 427, and also pp. xxvi *ff.*)

"H. C. R. Diary"—"Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary." } MSS. in Dr Williams's
"H. C. R. Rem." —" " " Reminiscences." } Library,[1] *v. inf.*, Symons.

"V. L. J." —"A Vision of the Last Judgment." (MS. essay, *v.* Sampson, 1913, p. xxxiv and p. xlviii. Quotations here taken from transcript in Gilchrist, ii.)

"Swed."	Blake's pencil notes in his copies of	Swedenborg's "The Wisdom of Angels concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom."	In the British Museum.
"Rey."		Sir Joshua Reynolds' Works.	
"Lav."	"	Lavater's "Aphorisms on Man." (Quotations here taken from a careful transcript of the original[2] made by the late Mr John Linnell, Junr.)	
Thornton	"	Thornton's "Lord's Prayer," recently in the Linnell collection (inaccurate transcripts, E. Y., i., and Ellis.	
Bacon	"	Bacon's Essays. (Quotations here taken from Gilchrist, i., pp. 315 *f.*)	

[1] I have to thank Mr Stephen K. Jones, of Dr Williams's Library, for kindly checking all my references to the "H. C. R." MSS., and for giving me other help in the proof stage of the first edition. My friend and colleague, Mr H. B. L. Webb, has done me a similar service for the second edition.

[2] Mr Ellis' transcription in his "Real Blake" agrees fairly well with Mr Linnell's transcription, but the latter follows Blake's characteristic use of capitals, abbreviations and stops, and is probably verbally closer to Blake. It, however, unaccountably omits a most remarkable Note given by Ellis to Aph. 397: "A vision of the Eternal Now" (Ellis, p. 137).

Gilchrist —" Life of William Blake, with selections from his poems and other writings," by Alexander Gilchrist, two-volume edition, 1880 (Macmillan).

Swinburne—" William Blake, a Critical Essay," by Algernon Charles Swinburne, new edition, 1906 (Chatto & Windus), reprint of ed. 1868, with a new preface by the author.

E. Y. —" The Works of William Blake, Poetic, Symbolic and Critical," by Edwin John Ellis and William Butler Yeats. 3 vols. (Quaritch, 1893.)

Sampson —" The poetical Works of William Blake. A New and Verbatim text from the Manuscript, Engraved and Letterpress Originals," by John Sampson (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1905).

Sampson, 1913 — " Oxford Edition. The Poetical Works of William Blake. Edited with an Introduction and Textual Notes by John Sampson, Oxford University Press, 1913." All quotations in the present work from poems in the Rossetti or Pickering MSS., and from the " Gates of Paradise " (engraved booklet), are taken from Dr Sampson's text.

Ellis —" The Real Blake, A Portrait Biography," by Edwin J. Ellis (Chatto & Windus, 1907).

Russell —" The Letters of William Blake, together with a Life, by Frederick Tatham," edited by Archibald G. B. Russell (Methuen, 1906) (from which quotations from the letters are here taken).

Symons —" William Blake," by Arthur Symons [1] (Constable, 1907).

Keynes —" A Bibliography of William Blake," by Geoffrey Keynes. (The Grolier Club of New York, 1921.)

Damon —" William Blake, His Philosophy and Symbols," by S. Foster Damon (Constable, 1924).

Illus. 1, 2, 3, etc., refers to Blake's Plate.

Illus. i., ii., iii., etc., refers to the commentary in the present work.

[1] Several errata in Mr Symons' transcriptions of the "H. C. R." MSS. are recorded in my first edition (p. 10). Generally speaking it is more reliable than the publication edited by the Rev. Thos. Sadler (Macmillan, 1869).

THE Reader may be glad to have his attention called to the different scope of the two introductory essays in the present edition. "*By Way of Preface*" was at first written mainly to deal with criticisms of the first edition. It became necessary to extend it later to explain the enlarged scope of the second edition, and to notice the important contributions to the subject made in Mr Damon's recent book. It generally presupposes some knowledge of Blake and his work, and where it contains important critical matter (such as the tracing of the evolution of the design for the Morning Stars) references to the relevant passages will be found in the Introduction and commentaries. The *Introduction* treats of the whole question of Blake's handling of the Book of Job and the thing which these illustrations became in his hands.

BY WAY OF PREFACE

(SECOND EDITION)

The call after twelve years for a second edition of this Key and Guide was a summons to return to a beautiful spot in a remote world of its own. There is nothing anywhere quite like the Job Inventions. The work rises, like the fanes in Illus. 1 and 4, a solitary Cathedral, amongst pastures and ancient hills. To interpret it one must go down into the crypt and dig among the foundations, finding clues amongst Blake's strange and obscure works, and, by patient and minute observation, making the designs interpret themselves.

Even the Bible story which they purport to set forth gives us little help in discovering the most intimate beauty of mind and vision Blake here expresses. The function of the illustrator he regarded as one of singular responsibility. His business was to go behind the text to the original inspiration and to set forth in design his own vision of what the Holy Spirit had said to the Hebrew poet.[1] Although in form, therefore, the work is a series of illustrations to the Bible drama, it assumes a strange independence, becoming a self-determined epic of the soul, marching by its own laws to its own dramatic crisis and reaching its serene finale in a spirit far more akin to that of Dante's " Comedy " than to that of the original poem.

[1] *Vide* Introduction, pp. 43 *ff.*

Its genius, however, is neither Hebrew nor Greek, nor Italian, it is Gothic. And though we find it posed against the mountain contours of the Hebrew poem from whose old woods and hoary rocks its stones and timbers are hewn, its architecture is of another land and age.

The clue to the symbolism which I was fortunate enough to stumble upon, and which, when followed up, supplies a kind of Blakean libretto to the music of the designs, was after all fairly obvious. If once the *fact* of symbolism in the designs is admitted—as it must be by those who read everything Blake wrote—what more natural than that the two things he was always thinking about, the bodily and the spiritual worlds, should be represented by the right hand and the left; especially natural was it for a mind teeming with New Testament imagery.

We may regret, if we like, that Blake chose to make so literal a use of the metaphor. An artist, endowed as he was with such unique power of expressing in the human form spiritual as well as bodily beauty (with their opposite uglinesses), need not, we are inclined to say, descend to define exactly which part of a design represents the things of the spirit and which the things of the body, or describe the spiritual states of his characters by the position of their hands and feet. It may well come as a shock to learn that by this device he really intended to express in every design something quite definite and often quite argumentative and polemical. But once we realise that Blake was deliberately adding a new instrument to his orchestra we must, I think, admit two things. We must begin by admitting that the instrument was a very obvious one. The right hand as holding the pen or graver was, for Blake's mysticism, something like the λογος made flesh:

the point where heaven touched earth.[1] And in the end I think we must admit that he used his new instrument as a true master. While nothing is lost of the glorious poetry of line and suggestion in such a design as the Morning Stars (Illus. 14), ranges of new harmonics greet the inward ear as we unravel the meaning of such a creation as Illus. 18. And with fuller understanding the whole work gains new significance and new unity.

But if the original work of exploration and excavation, as I was privileged to do it, was little less than pure delight, the attempt to make known its results seemed likely to be less smooth. To show the book as a work of independent magnitude in which a body of designs had become instinct with its own literary soul, was an attempt not unnaturally received with some concentration of criticism.

Apart from the frankly hostile, of which there were not many, critics assumed three principal attitudes. Those who had hitherto found themselves entirely excluded from the temple were inclined to bestow even too large a mead of admiration upon the "Guide Book" that had opened its beauties to them. And while not accepting more than a very small commission on the debt of gratitude due to Blake, it was not possible to be other than deeply gratified to find one's work the means of introducing so beautiful a creation of genius to a new and wider circle of admirers.

But even more gratifying, perhaps, was the generous appreciation of a few of the very few most entirely qualified to pass judgment. One in particular I cannot refrain from naming.

[1] "M[n].," p. 3, l. 5-8. Milton himself says that in writing prose "I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand," *v.* Preface to Book II. of "The Reason of Church Government."

Mr Lawrence Binyon had recently edited a very beautiful full-sized series of reproductions of the Job Illustrations for Messrs Methuen, in which he wrote of the engravings generally and individually with his well-known authority, but with no idea of their being something more than they appeared. There was, therefore, a touch of magnanimity in his very appreciative criticism in a signed article in the *Manchester Guardian* in which he said that the interpretation of their symbolical meaning only added to the spiritual beauty of the " Inventions."

Another Blake lover and life-student of the designs wrote, if I rightly recollect his words, of the " shock of delight " with which he realised, on opening my interpretation, that heaven in the second illustration is the inner world of Job's mind, where the terrible spiritual drama is fought out between God and Satan, his own indwelling good and evil powers. And an eminent Blake scholar and literary critic, recording his first impressions of the work, was almost too flattering in describing the commentary as worthy of the subject.

But between the beginners and the authorities lay a number of Blake admirers whose attitude was one of suspended judgment. During more than two generations the exterior of the " Cathedral " had held its place amongst the world's masterpieces. It was natural that before consenting to pass through the narrow doors of interpretation into an interior claiming to be an even more characteristic creation of the master, critics should require to be sure that there really was an inside, that there was a real way in, and something within worthy of so beautiful a without.

The review in the *Times Literary Supplement* expressed a somewhat different, but similarly reserved, point of view. Without disputing the probability of the clue offered, the writer maintained

the view that a symbolism which required a, so to speak, *prose* commentary, to make it intelligible was not artistically justifiable. But though the point is certainly interesting and arguable, I profess myself quite unconvinced. The criterion is surely the final result. All we need ask, when a work of art has to be interpreted either by artistic or mechanical or any other labour, is : " Was it worth the trouble ? " And whether the trouble consisted in the rehearsing necessary for the production of a play or symphony ; the hewing and carting necessary for the building of a cathedral ; or the criticism and interpretation demanded by certain poems or paintings, if the labour is justified by the result, the artist is also justified.

Indeed all really great art will bear much thinking about, much examination, because it is deeply interfused with the artist's own mind, and we have not finally understood his art till we have well pondered and explored the mind that fathered it. In the case of so peculiar a mind as Blake's the technical qualifications required are unusually searching, and no casual reader can be expected to equip himself completely without a certain amount of technical help.

Those, indeed, who would rather *not* know all that Blake meant than know it by means of a clear understanding of " his distinction between the natural and spiritual worlds," which Crabb Robinson mourns as " among the unintelligible sentiments which he was continually expressing," [1] have every right to enjoy the great beauties to be found in Blake's work uninterpreted. But there are those for whom it will still be worth while to pursue a deeper search into the recesses and purlieus of Blake's brain. And though there are probably some who will always continue to hold that Blake as an artist had no business to bury his meaning so deeply, there will be

[1] " H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 257). *Cp.* " H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 289).

others who continue to make the critical attempt to dig it up, and who will not believe, that because it has been buried, it must needs be unlovely when exposed to view.

A few points require fuller treatment than they received in the first edition.

More than one reviewer noted the fact that some of the animals in the Illustrations and margins are represented with their left fore-feet advanced, and some—notably Behemoth in Illus. 15, with their right. As usual, the symbolism is consistent. Behemoth, though representing the dry land of Earth in all its terrific materiality, is actually something seen in vision (as the belt of clouds indicates), and therefore, though his fearsome left flank is presented to the spectator, his right fore-foot is the advanced one. The only other animal in the book which is shown right foot forward is the lion in the sixth day of creation (margin of Illus. 14). This, too, is represented as a visionary appearance, and is, like the other panels of this wonderful margin, surrounded by its belt of clouds. All the other animals in the book that show either foot advanced, whether in the designs or margins, are left foot forward, and with one exception, they are creatures in the world of mundane fact.

The one exception is so interesting in itself and introduces us to so important a feature of Blake's symbolism that it is worth a moment's attention. The great fourteenth Illustration, " The Sons of God shouted for Joy," shows the horses of the sun-god with left feet in prominence, although they are in a sense spiritual realities. The ultimate reason is that in this design Jehovah alone represents the pure Spirit. Even the angels, the " Sons of God," have their left arms before their brethren's right ones.

But the whole design is a kind of orchestra, and to understand the symbolism we must realise that the four great sets of instruments

used—above, below, and on either hand of Jehovah—themselves have chords to play involving differentiation of part. The stars being in the natural as well as the spiritual world,[1] the Sons of God are alternately right foot and left, both arms (symbolising the active life) are uplifted and outstretched. But as Job, the earthly man, uplifts his right hand in worship of the Spiritual Deity, so these heavenly men advance the left in service of the Being who is always all that his creatures are not. From under his right hand the dayspring goes forth with outstretched arms, the *right* advanced ; from under his left the moon-goddess rides queen of night, both arms stretched forth, the *left* before the right.

But the created sun and moon, like the created stars, are both spiritual and corporeal. They are presences in both worlds ; they are visions, but at the same time outward facts. So that in order to show their complete nature Blake complements the driver in each case by his team, the steeds being symbolically left to balance the sun-god's right arm, the right serpent being foremost to balance the moon-goddess' left arm.

This introduces a new feature of the symbolism which we shall see used with great beauty in Illus. 18, where the lower segment of the divine sun or halo shows a right predominance though the human form has disappeared.[2] The Right and Left symbolism is in fact more than a matter of hands and feet. The feet in the human form represent the earthly state, or the attitude relative to earth, the hands often express the attitude towards heaven and heavenly things. But where the human form has disappeared or is shown in combination with other forms, the symbolism can be shown equally clearly by the lower or earthwards aspect of the being or

[1] *Vide* Illus. xii, especially p. 155.
[2] *Vide* Illus. xviii.

persona; by solar rays, by horses of the dawn, or by serpents of the night.[1]

In the earthly group below, Job and his wife show both hands, the friends two right and two left hands, one right and one left foot. Again, the balance is carefully kept, Job alone being definitely in complement or relation to Jehovah.

But the most interesting chapter in the composition of this design is the story of Blake's attempts to get symmetry in the seraphic group and his final inspired solution.

The invention of the angels appears in an incipient form as early as 1809, when Blake illustrated Milton's Hymn to the Nativity. In a beautiful design of the Shepherds worshipping the new-born child the Choir of Angels above sings with uplifted arms much as in the present illustration. But the Choir form a ring with their backs inwards. Three practically face the spectator, two more are seen on either side nearly in profile, and the rest of the circle is only suggested. The three full-face ones all cross their right arms in front of their neighbours' left ones. But the one furthest to the (spectator's) right crosses his left arm also in front of his neighbour's, so that he stands in front of the circle and is not as it were linked in as the others are.

When many years later Blake used the invention for the upper part of his fourteenth illustration for the Book of Job he introduced four angels full facing the spectator and none continuing the chain at either side. He now has a very interesting problem in symmetry to solve. It will be realised that with three angels

[1] It is worth noting in passing that just as the "Leftness" of the horses is not here an indication of their corporeal character, so the "Rightness" of the serpents does not show them as something essentially divine. Both are to be read in complement to the human figures.

the feet cannot be symmetrical if each assumed Blake's characteristic attitude of putting one foot in front of the other. In this case either two must advance their right or two must advance their left feet first. But with four angels there are two possible symmetrical arrangements. They may be arranged either thus :— Rt Rt lT lT (the capitals representing advanced feet), which is the arrangement in both the water-colour versions ; or they may be arranged lT Rt lT Rt, which is equally symmetrical but, being alternate, can, in imagination, be indefinitely continued and is, therefore, splendidly more appropriate to the imaginatively extended chain of the engraving.

But the problem with the arms is the opposite. With three angels a symmetrical arrangement is easy enough. Either the centre of the group has both arms in front of his neighbours, or both behind. With four it must be the second angel from one or other end that assumes this peculiar position. In both the water-colour versions the second angel from the spectator's left has both arms behind. But it is clear that Blake did not like this arrangement, and in the reduced pencil sketch made for the engraving (reproduced by Keynes, p. 181), he shows obvious indecision, and in fact shelves the problem by drawing the two centre arms so that no one can possibly say that either is in front or behind. This is symmetry at the expense of definition, and, though it was possible for a sketch, was impossible for an engraving. The feet, too, in this drawing seem to show indecision. The two middle figures are definitely Rt and lT (as they would be in either arrangement), but the outer angels seem to show that Blake has not yet made up his mind whether to follow the arrangement of the water-colours or the arrangement finally adopted for the engravings.

At this point he seems to have abandoned the idea of decorative

symmetry and to have opened his mind to the wider conception of making his symbolic symmetry something that knit the whole design. Now the centre and heart of the invention is God. Even he shows both natures, the spiritual and the material, by extending his left arm as well as his right. But, though all four worlds, Sun, Moon, Earth and Stars, also show both natures (as already explained), God alone shows the spiritual greatly in dominance. His right forefinger rises above his left, and his right foot alone appears. But God is all that his creatures are not, and consequently, while the earthly man Job worships him with right hand uplifted, the heavenly men worship him with left arms in prominence. It was then, surely, to perfect this new idea which represents heaven as incomplete until it is linked into one great society with earth, and both with God, that he conceived the idea of returning to his original conception of more angels to right and left, and he thus carries on the attitude of those shown by introducing arms from beyond the margin on both sides, making every left arm in front and every right arm behind, even at the edges of the design. D. G. Rossetti truly says that "the effect of sublimity and multitude is centupled," but for Blake the effect was not only greater but deeper too. These arms make the seraph-crowded heavens of Job's vision seem a mere glimpse into an infinite world of glory, at the same time that they make this infinite world itself seem consciously dependent on "the Eternal Great Humanity Divine." [1]

Mr Geoffrey Keynes, compiler of the beautiful and monumental Blake Bibliography recently issued by the Grolier Club, New York, in a careful and sympathetic review selected my interpretation of Illus. 10 as the least convincing. Probably he is right, and taken in

[1] "M[n]," p. 3, l. 8.

isolation I do not suggest that the symbolism could carry the burden of proof necessary. But read in connexion with the other Illustrations of the " Descent," especially 5 and 11, and in the light also of Blake's other conceptions, I consider the interpretation given to be as certain as anything in the book.

It should be noted that there is a general correspondence between the series 2 to 6, and 7 to 11, Satan taking the same place in the first series as the Friends in the second, and the first series being representative of earthly disaster, the second of spiritual torment and trial. Probably there is even a particular correspondence. In Illus. 2 and 7 we have the accusers rushing in. In 7, they are the three " Comforters " ; in 2 they are Satan and the spectral visages of Job and his wife in the Satanic flame. A more subtle correspondence may possibly be found between 3 and 8, and 4 and 9.[1] In the first of these catastrophic disaster falls on Job's house and family, corresponding to his sudden breakdown into spiritual despair, the shattering of his mansions of faith, in 8. And again, the messengers of material disaster in Illus. 4, perhaps find their counterpart in the terrific vision in Illus. 9 appearing with its message of spiritual desolation. At all events, 5 certainly corresponds with 10, and 6 with 11. In 5, Job betrays his self-righteousness by material action ; in 10, he betrays the same error spiritually. In 6, his body lies prostrate and smitten with boils under Satan's feet, in 11 his soul lies tortured by horrific visions of a Satanic god. And as there can be no doubt that 5 leads inevitably up to 6, so 10 must be regarded as the immediate

[1] It is possible to find so many parallels of this kind within the series that one wonders whether even a mind like Blake's could consciously intend them all. What is certain is that he never allows himself to be bound by his schemes. If they interfere with his art he abandons them—when they enhance it he further developes them. So that one may often encounter genuine vestiges of half abandoned schemes.

cause of 11. If corporeal error makes us helpless victims of Satan in this world, spiritual error is the actual worship of Satan as God.

Probably a reason why some readers find Illus. 10 a stumbling-block is that there is no clear suggestion in the marginal texts that Job is in error. This was not to be expected as Blake was not attempting to rewrite but to reinterpret the Book of Job. The text, however, below the design, describes man as a flower that is cut down, and brings us very close in spirit to the passage in "Jerusalem," where Blake describes the ephemeral character of man in self-righteousness, however good.[1] For the tragedy of self-righteousness is for Blake just this: that every effort a man makes to justify himself only further incriminates him. The error is such that the more we have to boast of, the greater our danger of falling into it. Righteousness is not a thing which can belong to an individual, because right living is a relation to others and only realisable in a society. There it is love, and for love there is no longer obligation or merit; the interchange of all spiritual and material things is pure joy.[2]

[1] "In Self-hood we are nothing, but fade away in morning's breath," etc., "J^m.," p. 45, l. 13, and *vide* Illus. x, especially pp. 140 *ff.*

[2] A point of small intrinsic importance which I gather contributed to Mr Keynes' uneasiness regarding my interpretation of this design, was that it was the only place in the book where I "grouped" the figures for symbolical purposes, pointing to the fact that the friends, as a group, showed two right feet and one left. But though I did not develop this characteristic of Blake's method in the First Edition, there is no doubt about his employing it. Not only are the figures in Illus 14 (as referred to above) in symbolic groups, but the last two (perhaps three) illustrations of the series are undoubtedly "groups." It happens, however, that the evidence for the friends in Illus. 10 being a group, is particularly strong. Blake is markedly fond of "Trinities" of Accusers. There is the well-known design called the "Accusers of Theft, Adultery, Murder, . . . Satan's Holy Trinity, etc." (Gilchrist, ii. 279). And on p. 93 of "Jerusalem" the Accusers of Socrates—Anytus, Meletus and Lycon—are represented pointing the finger of scorn, and the legend written across their backs finishes the sentence on the thigh of the last, definitely making them into a single group.

While the first edition of this book was in the Press I carried my investigation of the Right and Left symbolism further into certain of Blake's earlier works. The results were published in the *Quest* in October 1911, and April 1912.[1] Certain conclusions in the second of these are of peculiar interest to students of the Job.

Blake, it seems, worked up his Inventions like his poems, through versions or stages; and as he brought them to their final form he often made them more definitely symbolical, or changed the symbolism to fit his purpose. In his Job designs, he uses figures first envisaged many years before, and sometimes reverses them to suit his symbolical intention. For instance, the principal human figure in Illus. 3 is a reversal of nearly the same figure published thirty years earlier on the last page of the "Europe." Satan, in Illus. 2, he takes from p. 3 of his "Urizen" and Jehovah, in Illus. 14 (much ennobled), from his "America" (p. 8); but in neither of these last cases is the figure reversed, because it is already in the symbolical attitude he required.

In Illus. 18 he alters the symbolism of an earlier design by turning the main figure round so as to show its back to the spectator. In this way he makes a new harmony between the Divine and Human persons, Job's left (his humanity) being now for the first time on the same side of the design as the Divine right. His body and his spirit are now reconciled, and it is possible that Blake attached a special meaning to the subscribed text, "And the Lord *turned* the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends."

This is the climax of Blake's vision of the Book of Job. The Divine and Human are now entirely interfused, and we are

[1] *Vide infra*, Appendix G, and note Appendix A.

to see them no longer in distinction. Henceforth Job is in God and God in Job. But this is only possible in a Society. Job's true humanity (Illus. 19) or his true divinity (Illus. 20 and 21) is realised in the appropriateness of his mental attitude to others, in the rightness of his relation to the group of which he is a part, itself always symbolically represented as both bodily and spiritual.

Returning after an interval of years to the close consideration of this Vision of Blake's, and seeing it from a position of somewhat greater detachment than was possible when just emerging from the workshop of restoration, I am tempted to venture an estimate.

From one point of view it seems to be a mediæval solution of an 18th-century problem. The individualism and the naturalism which in their youth had fed the flames of the Renaissance were, I suppose, in Blake's day, dragging out their last forlorn stages in a narrow and unimaginative ethical Deism. But Blake's contemporaries, Wordsworth and Shelley, were attempting to create a new heaven and a new earth, founded deeply upon human nature and its overflow into that universal Nature revealed in the beauty and order of Earth and of the stellar universe. They were the Renaissance in its second and fuller birth, when Nature, far more deeply explored and admired, seemed again a new discovery and inspiration.

But Blake, professing to cut himself off from Nature, literally as from the devil, retires to find his peace in something deeply within, and though his theism becomes almost pure immanence, and is in fact little more than a word, he nevertheless achieves something far more akin to the beatific vision than any other English master.

Shakespeare gives us immeasurably greater pictures of the grandeur, the beauty, the tenderness and the terribleness of human character and emotions. Wordsworth gives us a sublimer vision of the human mind and its majestic destiny, and in rare moments he is filled with true social passion. Shelley trembles with love and pity for human suffering, and sings with a white passion of poetry the goodness and the fairness of the naked human soul in its fair earth. But Blake alone reawakens the harmonies of paradise in his sense that human beauty and goodness are *nothing* except as found in the self-annihilating rapture of human society, which for him is God.

And yet when I had finished this book the Renaissance spoke in the person of one of its most lovable interpreters, the late Frederick Seebohm, to offer a criticism that must ever remain. "Yes," he said, "in the end Job was happy. And he found his happiness in a new attitude of love and humility towards his fellow-men. But there were still people who were not happy."

For the modern Renaissance spirit there are no terms to be made with a paradise in which a perfect joy can be found, even in God himself, while other human souls in earth or hell, are still in misery or degradation. And this for Seebohm was the outcome of Blake's Job.

There is surely something here which it is better not to answer. The mediæval heaven was indeed a true society, and for that reason it can never cease to hold its place in our highest visions. But for the immanentalist like Blake, as for Wordsworth, there can be no finality, except in a Society which embraces man as such, man as a species; and ultimately, indeed, all sentient being.

There can indeed no more be perfect and final bliss for humanity

as it exists to-day than perfect and final righteousness. Human responsibility is never completely fulfilled while there are human souls unrighteous or unblessed, and so long as we share responsibility we must carry with it our share both of the shame and of the sorrow of existence.

And yet there are moments when the soul finds something in the presence of nature or of human genius which is the earnest and eternal pledge that the race which dominates the planet as no race has ever dominated shall in the long last find perfect reconciliation with itself and with its earth.

And if Blake does not provide us with a final solution, he guides our feet to one of those beacon moments whence we see the end, and by which we are lighted towards its hills.

Golders Green
May 1922

The above was already written and in print when a strange thing happened. It was discovered that the moulds of the first edition had been lost and that the whole book would have to be completely reset. This offered the opportunity for a more extensive revision of the study than had at first been contemplated, and had I then had leisure for the purpose the result might have been a new edition with the scholarship advanced, revised and brought up to date. As it was, I had to make a choice—either to let the book go practically as it was, or, neglecting recent contributions to Blake literature, and making no further effort to unravel Blake's earlier work, to use my rather rare moments of leisure in an intensified study of the illustrations themselves by the aid of the clues already collected. For choosing this middle

course Blake himself must offer my justification. "A line," he says, "is a line in its minutest subdivisions, straight or crooked. It is itself, not intermeasurable by anything else. Such is Job." [1] And it is certainly true that, once the essential features of Blake's mind and system and symbolism have been grasped, the "Job" is its own interpreter. It is not an attempt to say or confute anything said by anyone else. It is not even a repetition of things said by himself before. It is an independent creation of his mind and art, utterly and entirely Blakean in every line, but Blake as he has never been before, simpler, stronger, profounder and serener. Truly the Job is Job in its minutest parts and is not measurable by anything else.

But what it seemed reasonable to suppose might be a task of weeks or months has proved a work of years, and I lay it down at last without any consciousness of completion, but rather in zeal to share with others some of my own winnings. Errors, both of fact and interpretation, doubtless remain, for, though I have tried diligently to correct any I could find, it seemed to me even more important to carry the study forward than to expend too much effort in working over former work. The matter of the two former introductions has been extended, recast, and thrown into one, with, I hope, some advantage to the reader, the place of the former being taken by the present "Preface." Although this study has never professed to criticise the designs from the artistic point of view, yet as I have worked upon their meaning, the wonderful way in which they utter, in line and movement, in light and shade, and what I may call their architecture, the thought and passion with which they are instinct, has been more than ever present with me, and has, I hope, got through

[1] Letter to George Cumberland, 12th April 1827 (Russell, p. 222).

here and there to the reader of my commentary. I have frequently added a descriptive paragraph at the end.

In the earlier part of the work the new matter is principally connected with Illus. 3 and 6, which are shown to be respectively the destruction of Job's sons in their vices and Job in his virtues, both, according to Blake, equally damning to the man in spiritual error. This is largely connected with their sexual life, and opens a beautiful chapter in Blake's conception of the story of Job's relations with his wife. But the principle changes and additions are all connected with the structure of the work, which is largely dictated by Blake's fourfold system and his wonderfully elaborated theories of inward and outward vision and of the inward and outward worlds. The problem of the book as left by the first edition was to understand how Blake reconciled his conviction that "Nature is the work of the Devil" [1] with the splendid designs of God in Nature beginning with the Stars of Illus. 12 and ending with Behemoth and Leviathan. Glorious as these illustrations are, and necessary to any honest attempt to set forth the Bible story, they seemed in flat contradiction to all Blake's ideas from youth to maturity. And yet it becomes increasingly plain that God in the Whirlwind is God in Nature and God as creator of Behemoth and Leviathan is the creator of this world.[2]

The answer is, in the first place, that they are not the final revelation of Christ but the partial revelation of Elihu. They correspond to the familiar threefold and fourfold vision of Blake's system.[3] The appearance of Elihu is followed by Three great

[1] "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 265).
[2] *Vide* Illus. 13 and 15.
[3] Letter to Thos. Butts, 22nd Nov. 1802. (Russell, p. 108 *ff.*)

theophanies (13, 14, 15), and the appearance of Christ by Four phases of Paradise (18, 19, 20, 21).

But here we encounter a subject of great interest. Speaking of Blake's earlier work, Mr Damon remarks, "The first three of the Lambeth books . . . deal with the events of Eternity; the other four with the history of the world. The symbolism of these numbers is obvious, since Three is the number of God, and Four the number of Man, the sum of the two being the sacred number Seven." [1] This is quite obviously the sequence in the Job. God appears as Jehovah in Illus. 13, 14, 15, and Job himself represents the Divine-Humanity in Illus. 18, 19, 20, and 21. Yet it is beyond dispute that the fourfold is the higher vision,[2] so that we are faced with this very interesting fact that, in the Job illustrations, God represents the temporal and Job himself the eternal. This at first seems very surprising, but I do not think we can possibly doubt that it represents Blake's final thought.

The matter may perhaps be put thus: The Morning Stars (14) and the Behemoth (15) designs (the last two of the threefold system) represent the natural order seen in imagination in two contrasted aspects (let us say the Poetic and the Mundane). But, after all, the very existence of the natural order in its temporal and spacial vastness is a deduction from our sense impressions [3] and not an immediate experience of our own. The stuff of fourfold

[1] Damon, p. 62.

[2] *Cp.* "The Sexual is Threefold: the Human Fourfold" ("M^{a}.," p. 3*, l. 5). (*Cp.* "Humanity is far above Sexual Organisation," "J^{m}.," p. 79, ll. 73-4.)

[3] "And every Space that a Man views around his dwelling-place,
Standing on his own roof, or in his garden on a mount
Of twenty-five cubits in height, such space is his Universe:

. . . . . .

Such are the Spaces called Earth and such its dimension:
As to that false appearance which appears to the reasoner,

vision, on the other hand, is immediate experience, in Job's case his own life as he knows it. Consequently the two closing scenes of the fourfold vision (20 and 21) repeat the same two contrasted aspects of vision (Poetic and Mundane), but shown as applied to this more immediate reality of consciousness. Jehovah (Imagination), Creator of the Fourfold universe of Nature, now corresponds with Job, creator of a Threefold vision of experience, sculptured on the walls of his home.[1] His symbolical attitude is similar to Jehovah's. But whereas Jehovah, in the Behemoth invention, points down with his left arm to the pit of nature, Job in the finale lifts his left hand up to heaven, and, with the right, plays his harp, firmly planted on the ground between his feet but soaring above the margin. "Behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven."

Now the four conceptions may be expounded thus: (*a*) the natural order seen in poetic vision, (*b*) the natural order seen in Experience,[2] (*c*) the life-experience of man seen by poetic vision,

> As of a Globe rolling thro' Voidness, it is a delusion of Ulro,
> The Microscope knows not of this nor the Telescope, they alter
> The ratio of the Spectators' Organs but leave Objects untouched."
>
> "M^{n}.," p. 28, ll. 4-7 and 14-18.

Cp. Note, pp. 163 *ff.*

[1] The Threefold (Jehovah) makes a fourfold creation (Illus. xiv), and the Fourfold (Job) makes a threefold creation (Illus. xx), which suggests that God makes Man and Man makes God. *Vide infra*, pp. 165 *f.*

[2] The Behemoth and Leviathan is Blake's final version of the Tiger ("S. E."), the terrific side of creation, in which we see the fires of Divinity enclosed in the midnight forest of this life. After the first four verses describing the creation of the Tiger, the "distant skies" where "burnt the fire of thine eyes" suddenly change, throw down their spears, and weep. This is the symbol (*a*) of morning (the cold, hard light of the stars giving way to dewy dawn), and (*b*) of the Incarnation, the passing of the age of cruelty into one of pity. Yet even after this the Tiger is as true an expression of God as the Lamb. And in the passage from Jerusalem describing the creation of Behemoth and Leviathan ("J^{m}.," p. 91, l. 38 ff.) this work of the Reasoning power (the scientific view of creation) is shattered by the Poetic power, but serves its end for

(*d*) the life-experience of man seen in Experience. We cannot *rest* for ever in the Vision of the Morning Stars because it is the supreme vision only of Innocence. Its breakdown under Experience is into the vision of Behemoth and Leviathan, the "other side" to this conception of a perfect world order, just as the Tiger is the "other side" to the Lamb. Once the Fall was a fact, redemption could only come through Earth and Experience. Christ himself must come down.[1] And terrible as Earth appears to those who look down at it from Eternity (Illus. 15), yet if we would *hold* the Vision of Eternity, Earth is the right place to look up from (Illus. 21).

One further addendum has become necessary. A few weeks ago Mr S. Foster Damon's ten years' labours ended in the publication in England and America of his comprehensive study of Blake's philosophy and symbolism.[2] I am neither competent, nor is it my business here, to appraise the advance in Blake scholarship which it registers. But the chapter on the Job Invention, though generously acknowledging its indebtedness to my work, certainly advances the study of the illustrations in directions where I had never looked. I have added a number of references in the footnotes to Mr Damon's book, but some of his contributions are too important to be dealt with in this way.

Mr Damon claims for the Job series a sevenfold structure, which he explains as the "Seven Eyes of God," "Man's customary course through Experience" (Damon, p. 224). This he works out as being seven pairs ending in the climax of revelation, Illus. 14,

'The ruins of Time build mansions in Eternity" (Letter to Hayley, 6th May 1800. Russell, p. 69, *vide* Illus. xv).

[1] "Jm.," p. 90, l. 38, etc.

[2] *Vide supra* List of Authorities, p. 11.

followed by seven singles reversing the process and ending where the story began, with, of course, an infinite difference. If we had to make a choice between a sevenfold explanation of the designs and the fourfold one which I have adopted I should myself regard the fourfold as having a considerably greater interpretive value. Blake's method, however, is so consistently symphonic that we are in no way obliged to reject one analysis if we accept the other, and I do not doubt that Blake delighted in harmonising at least two schemes.[1] I confess that every fresh attempt that I have made against the Job fortress has yielded a new structural scheme. In the first edition of this work I attached importance to the critical positions of Illus. 6 and 16, standing respectively half-way between the nadir and the sunset or sunrise. In the present preface (written two years ago, and before I had worked out the fourfold system in the designs), I called attention to a possible correspondence between Illus. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Some of these correspondences may be accidental, but with a mind like Blake's it is not safe to assume they are so. What seems to me probable in regard to the sevenfold and fourfold systems is that he began on a sevenfold scheme and never consciously forsook it, but that, as a matter of fact, the fourfold scheme assumed increasing importance for him as he elaborated his theme, and that the sevenfold scheme is sometimes only left in traces.[2]

[1] Mr Damon's very interesting comparison of the Job series with the Tarot cards is another instance of a probable strand in Blake's complex scheme. Damon, 237 f.

[2] Lucifer (Pride) (following Mr Damon's terminology and exposition) may be represented by Illus. 1 and 2, Molech (Executioner) by 3 and even 4, Elohim (Judge) I find much more difficult to trace in 5 and 6, Shaddai (the Accuser) is very difficult to trace in 7 and 8 where the friends are still in perfect sympathy. Pahad (Horror of results) is possible if the horror is Eliphaz's in 9 and 10. Jehovah (Perception of Evil) is very descriptive of 11 and 12, and Jesus (the revelation of Good) would be most appropriate to 13 and 14 if Jesus were not so definitely reserved for 16 and

One of Mr Damon's most interesting contributions is his interpretation of Illus. 3, and I am pleased to be able to add a confirming observation. He is very clear that the destruction of Job's sons is the result of Job's own thought, Job in fact in the person of Satan *is* the Accuser. This, being interpreted, is to say that Job's own religion strictly applied accuses and condemns the patriarchal life, whether as led by himself or his sons. If we think in terms of Righteousness, as Job did, the latter cannot, it is true, be too strongly condemned, but even Job's own life cannot escape. Once assume the Satanic attitude of Accusation or Judgment, neither vice nor virtue can escape Execution. Accordingly Job himself suffers under Satan in Illus. 6 as his sons do in Illus. 3. But there is a difference in Satan. In the original design for Illus. 6 he was winged. But in the final version in these engravings he is only winged where he represents another's thought, and is sped upon " the young men " from Job's accusing mind.

I am pleased to find myself able to make this offering to Mr Damon as a kind of acknowledgment of the many beautiful things I have learnt from him. But it makes my own suggestion that in this design Satan represents the soul of Job's son much more difficult unless we suppose that this one son of all the rest implicitly adopts his father's faith and becomes Judge and Accuser of his brethren's (and unconsciously of his own) way of life.

But however we interpret the design (and similar passages of Blake's thought), there is a point we may not miss without a great

17. This last point is not very important as we must suppose " Jesus " in the sevenfold system to be purely a symbol of Divinity, but I think his obvious reality in the fourfold scheme (16 and 17) is an instance of its greater importance. It is to be noted that even in the fourfold system, as explained, the threefold vision and the fourfold vision of the last two Acts together constitute a septenary vision which is itself an important fact, and supports Mr Damon's view. *Vide* also *supra*, note 1, p. 32.

injustice to Blake's virility and sincerity of mind. Whatever Blake means he is not in this design castigating *Job* for wantonly castigating his *sons*. Blake is here as much the "Accuser" of the "State" as Job.[1] His horror is genuine and profound. It is true he forgives the individuals and there is nothing vindictive in the spirit of the design, but I cannot believe but that he is resolute to show with all his power the awfulness, the pitifulness of the sins of the flesh at the same time as he describes them as the logical breakdown of a legal and material faith such as Job has erected for his sons to dwell in. In other words Job's error is not in destroying his sons' house, but in ever having built it. Once erected it is better destroyed than standing. In this world the Satanic Trinity becomes, like the Furies of Æschylus, a necessary agent of redemption.[2]

As I conclude my long labour of revision I am keenly conscious of remaining defects, many being due to the spasmodic periods of leisure during which it had to be undertaken. Apart from actual errors, many repetitions occur both in the text and the notes. Some of these serve a purpose, for they are repetitions with variation, and Blake's citadel is not to be entered but by repeated assault. But if some of his finest utterances are here staled by too constant use, it is to be remembered that excerpts at best are plucked flowers and torn branches. By returning to Blake's own fields and forests the reader will recover them in their native wildness.

GRASMERE
September 1924

[1] "Distinguish between the Man, & his present State," "Jm.," p. 52.

[2] *Cp.* "Come Lord Jesus, take on thee the Satanic Body of Holiness," "Jm.," p. 90, l. 38, etc.

NOTE ON BLAKE'S LIFE

For the benefit of those to whom Blake's life is unknown, it may be well here to add a brief note respecting "the transitory being that beheld this Vision."

Blake was born in 1757 and died before completing his seventieth year, in 1827.[1] The world-wide importance of the events of his day and the great work of his literary contemporaries left him strangely apart. Though vitally interested in both, his genius was of a kind to be almost as little moulded by them,[2] and quite as little of an influence upon them, as if he had lived in the Middle Ages.[3]

[1] The facts of Blake's life here told are to be found in the standard authorities such as Tatham and Gilchrist. The complete list of references will be found in the Index under "Blake's Life."

[2] It is true that events in America and France must be associated with a profound change in Blake's mind that perhaps came to a head about 1800; just as he was contemplating his removal to the country. But a revulsion of feeling, similar in origin to Wordsworth's own, produced an almost opposite effect. While Wordsworth sternly resolved to "inspect the basis of the social pile," Blake fled still further into his own mind, convinced that salvation could only come from "within." *Cp.* Letter to Dr Trusler, 23rd Aug. 1799, "I feel that a man may be happy in this world," etc. (Russell, p. 62), with his poem to Flaxman, 12th Sept. 1800, "Seeing such visions [in America and France] I could not subsist on the Earth," etc. (Russell, p. 72). His scorn of "politics" is frequently expressed in his conversations with Crabb Robinson (Symons, pp. 255, 258, 262, etc.). But *cp. infra*, note 2, p. 211.

[3] This last does not apply to his pictorial art, which was "d—d good to steal from," as Fuseli wittily said (Gilchrist, i. p. 52). It is, of course, also true that Blake was enormously influenced by Swedenborg and others, though not by the great literary lights of his day—and not so as to affect the extraordinarily persistent character of his genius, whatever its mental diet or formal clothing.

The son of an only moderately prosperous hosier, home-educated and with none but such opportunities as he discovered for himself of access to the limited culture of the London of his day, Blake even in his boyhood chose his masters from the ages. Isaiah, Milton, Raphael, Michael Angelo and later Shakespeare [1] were among the men who delighted and nourished his mind in the bud. Yet even in his teens he showed a poetic genius already too original to be merged in the character of these masters. At fourteen he was already "Blake" [2]—nay at four we hear of his first "vision," and throughout his boyhood of his seeing now a Hebrew prophet beneath a tree, now angels in the branches or among the haymakers in the early summer morning. On his death-bed he was still singing of heaven, still drawing and painting with undimmed powers of mind and hand.

But as his masters were picked from the centuries, so his admirers have hitherto been few and picked. Always unknown by the many, and largely ignored even by the literary, such men as Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge [3] and Lamb [4] discovered him in his life, while Ruskin, the Rossettis and Burne-Jones have borne testimony in our own day to his extraordinary powers; though it was only with Swinburne that the serious attempt was begun to decipher and understand him.

His first disciple and perhaps his only quite unconditional one, was his wife. It is probable that she could neither read nor write

[1] *Vide* poem to Flaxman (Russell, p. 71); and also Tatham's Life (Russell, p. 4).

[2] *Vide* poem, "How sweet I roam'd," etc., and Malkin's note that it was written before he was fourteen (Symons, p. 323).

[3] H. C. R. Letter to Dorothy Wordsworth (Symons, p. 276).

[4] *Cp.* Sampson (p. 97), Note to "The Chimney Sweeper," "S. I.," and Gilchrist, i. p. 74. Also "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, pp. 283-4).

when he married her,[1] and that she never pretended to understand his mystic system, but she gave Blake an unfailing wealth of pure devotion, and what he perhaps needed even more, an anchorage on earth, while Blake in exchange gave her heaven. He taught her to draw, to print off his engraved works from the plates and afterwards colour them, and even to see visions of her own. She alone kept his house or tenement; joined his thirty- and forty-mile walks into the country; rose at midnight to steady him under the tempestuous workings of artistic afflatus; believed in him when no one else believed in him; prayed with him when the very visions deserted him, and by her womanly skill, her innate sense of honour, her unfaltering courage and common-sense, saved him from worldly disaster and not seldom, perhaps, from his own extreme theories of life.

His profession of engraver was never pursued with marked success, yet though sometimes in great penury and at no time in affluence, he is said never to have been in debt; and no genius ever lived a life of more spotless purity and honour in a world whose nature and ways were ever foreign to his mind.

One of the strangest features of this strange man is the mysterious eclipse from which he seemed to suffer in his middle life. The early lyrical genius of his boyhood did not last beyond life's early summer. The "Songs of Innocence" were published when he was thirty-two, and before he was forty his "happy pipe" was dropped, scarcely ever to be resumed.

Of a corresponding failure of his powers of expression in pictorial art, he was himself painfully conscious. And yet, the less

[1] The evidence for this generally accepted statement is that she signed her name with a cross in the marriage register (Gilchrist, i. p. 38). Symons points out, three brides out of seven on the same page did likewise (p. 46).

his success, the more resolute he became to follow still deeper the direction his guiding spirit seemed to move in ; ever hoping and believing that the dawn was at hand when the course of his genius would appear justified before the world.[1]

It cannot be said that that dawn ever came for him during his life. Even by the very few who appreciated him he was less than half understood.[2] But during his later years his long-obscured genius did actually emerge in greater strength than ever, and it were hard to find a more beautiful chapter amongst the annals of art than the evening of his life spent in engraving these Job designs and in inventing the not less wonderful but unfinished and almost unknown illustrations to Dante's " Comedy."

The room in Fountain Court, Strand, in which he and his wife worked, cooked, ate and slept, was lighted by a large sash window in one corner. This overlooked a court, beyond which might be seen the Thames and the distant Downs of Surrey or Kent, and by

[1] On 23rd Oct. 1804, he writes to Hayley : " I am really drunk with intellectual vision whenever I take a pencil or graver into my hand, even as I used to be in my youth, and as I have not been for twenty dark, but very profitable, years. I thank God that I courageously pursued my course through darkness " (Russell, pp. 171-2). And earlier he says in a letter to Butts (10th Jan. 1802) : " He who keeps not right onwards is lost " (Russell, p. 100).

[2] Tatham, to whom he left nearly all his unpublished MSS., sold or even burnt them all (Ellis and Yeats, vol. i. p. 167 ; *cp.* Garnett, " Portfolio," Oct 1895, p. 70, and footnote, pp. 71 and 72). Palmer sold his invaluable MS. book for 10s. to D. G. Rossetti (*vide* Sampson's Bibliographical Preface to the Rossetti MS., p. 138). Gilchrist gives an amusing account of Varley's attempts to see Blake's visions, sitting by his side and looking up where Blake looked (Gilchrist, i. p. 300). Crabb Robinson says (" H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825) : " Among the unintelligible sentiments which he was continually expressing is his distinction between the natural and the spiritual world." And again (24th Dec.) : " The same half crazy crotchets about the two worlds—the eternal repetition of which must in time become tiresome " (Symons, pp. 257 and 264). Probably Linnell understood him better than anyone, but he, too, was occasionally shocked by Blake's heresies (Gilchrist, i. pp. 370-1).

his work-table before the window, was hung Albert Dürer's "Melencolia."

An old man now, tired and even listless in those rare moments when his hands must be idle; more liable month by month to attacks of prostration and pain, he sat or lay in his earthly home, and drew and sang and dreamed of heaven. He was still in poverty, but owing to Linnell's commission to engrave the present series of designs, he was spared the necessity to stave off hunger by engraving a set of Morland's pig and poultry subjects. Yet, despite poverty and neglect, the bitterness of disappointed genius was now almost entirely gone from him, and much of the virulence of his wrath against contemporary Philistinism was lost in his deep and tender pity for human failings. Gentle, strong and radiant, we may picture him in his last days telling this tale of human frailty, human courage and human love, primarily indeed for his own pure joy, but probably also with a mysterious faith that it was for the redemption of his fellow-men.

Experience

(from "Four Zoas" MS.)

"What is the price of Experience, do men buy it for a song,
Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is bought with the price
Of all that a man hath, his house, his wife, his children.
Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy,
And in the witherd field where the farmer plows for bread in vain.
It is an easy thing to triumph in the summers sun,
And in the vintage; & to sing on the waggon loaded with corn.
It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted,
To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless wanderer,
To listen to the hungry raven's cry in wintry season,
When the red blood is filld with wine & with the marrow of lambs.
It is an easy thing to laugh at wrathful elements,
To hear the dog howl at the wintry door, the ox in the slaughter house moan;
To see a god on every wind & a blessing on every blast;
To hear sounds of love in the thunderstorm that destroys our enemies house;
To rejoice in the blight that covers his field, & the sickness that cuts off his children.
While our olive & vine sing & laugh round our door, & our children bring fruits and flowers,
Then the groan & the dolor are quite forgotten, & the slave grinding at the mill,
And the captive in chains, & the poor in the prison, & the soldier in the field
When the shatterd bone hath laid him groaning among the happier dead.
It is an easy thing to rejoice in the tents of prosperity:
Thus could I sing & thus rejoice: but it is not so with me."

Suffering

(from Conversation)

"Tho' he spoke of his happiness, he spoke of past sufferings, and of sufferings as necessary—'There is suffering in Heaven, for where there is the capacity of enjoyment, there is the capacity of pain.'"

Fruition

(from a late MS. Poem)

"I have Mental Joy, & Mental Health,
And Mental Friends, & Mental wealth;
I've a Wife I love, & that loves me;
I've all But Riches Bodily.

"I am in God's presence night & day,
And he never turns his face away;
. . . . .
Then if for Riches I must not Pray,
God knows, I little of Prayers need say."

INTRODUCTION

BLAKE AND THE BOOK OF JOB

"In the Book of Job," said Blake, when as a young man he flung his "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" at an unconcerned public, "Milton's Messiah is call'd Satan." [1]

Any full discussion of this surprising statement would carry us far afield and belongs rather to the exposition of the earlier work than to the Job illustrations. But besides exemplifying Blake's love of reversing good and evil, which our analysis will discover to be one of the Job motives, it is interesting as showing the confidence of his appeal to the Book of Job in support of his own wild visions of truth. This appeal to scripture was entirely characteristic, but it was to scripture as interpreted by himself. In the same work he represents the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel as declaring that their object of worship was the "Poetic genius" whom Blake clearly opposes to the Miltonic Messiah.[2] Even Milton, by the way, he declares "a true poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it," and he categorically asserts that "the Jehovah of the Bible" was "none other than he who dwells in flaming fire." [3]

Half a life-time later, much chastened and much matured, he

[1] "M. H. H.," p. 5.

[2] On pages 5 and 6 "M. H. H.," Messiah is identified with Reason while the Devil and the Jehovah of the Bible are alike identified with Desire—Reason and Desire being the two opposing principles. On pages 12 and 13 the God of Israel is described as the Poetic Genius.

[3] "M. H. H.," p. 6.

still "warmly declared" to Crabb Robinson "that all he knew was in the Bible," but, as the diarist adds, "he understands by the Bible the Spiritual Sense." "As to the natural sense, that Voltaire was commissioned by God to expose."[1] The spiritual sense was, of course, the sense which his own vision saw as true. Crabb Robinson first met him just after he had finished work on these engravings,[2] and tells us further of his version of Genesis "as understood by a Christian Visionary" in which he says "in a style resembling the Bible the spirit is given."[3] The main text of the first illustration is very significant in this connexion. "The letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life. It is spiritually discerned," which may fairly be taken as the text of the whole series.

But, if all scripture needed interpretation, the dramatic character of the Book of Job demanded interpretation by picture, and Blake early began to choose subjects from its story for illustration.[4] This is almost the same as saying that he chose them

[1] "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 267). On p. 24 "M. H. H." he speaks of frequently reading the Bible with an incarnation of Elijah "in its infernal or diabolical sense."

[2] The last mention of work on the engravings is in a letter to Linnell dated 10th Nov. 1825 (Russell, p. 210). Crabb Robinson's first entry in his diary mentioning his meeting Blake is under date 10th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 253).

[3] "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, pp. 267-8).

[4] In an engraved prospectus dated 10th Oct. 1793, the first picture described is "Job, a Historical Engraving" (Gilchrist, ii. p. 285). This presumably is the one of which there is a print in the British Museum. It is inscribed: "Painted and Engraved by William Blake. Job: 'What is Man That thou shouldest Try him Every Moment?' Job vii. 17 & 18. Published 18th August 1793 by W. Blake, No. 13 Hercules Buildings, Lambeth." Mr Lawrence Binyon ("Engravings") reproduces one of this subject with the suggested date about 1792. There is also a drawing, undated and unsigned (*Carfax Cat.*, p. 18), the same no doubt as W. M. Rossetti describes as in Indian Ink, though he suggests the date 1796? (Gilchrist, ii. p. 256). In any case, therefore, we find Blake at work on the subject before any of

for interpretation. Even his own writings he seldom illustrates literally. He seems, as it were, to go back to the original inspiration and to seek expression for a different aspect of the truth he has tried to set forth in the text.[1] Nor was he conscious of the limitations which would, for most men, have ruled out the method. For him, as we shall see, it seemed possible to express moral and spiritual facts quite as definitely and explicitly in a picture as in a poem, and he considered that the latter might not only be interpreted or expounded but actually corrected by the former. From Crabb Robinson again we learn that he spoke of frequently seeing Milton in imagination.[2] "He came lately as an old man. He said he came to ask a favour of me. He said he had committed an error in his Paradise Lost which he wanted me to correct

the Lambeth prophecies and soon after the supposed date of the "Marriage." It is very interesting to note that the features in this early work are the same as those eventually adopted for the present engraving, especially in Illus. 10. Gilchrist catalogues six other designs from Job of various dates besides the two complete sets of water colours (Gilchrist, ii. pp. 223-5)—(three on p. 226, Nos. 119, "Job and his three Daughters," and 120 [two] "Job surrounded by his family," and "Job and his three Daughters"; one on p. 236, No. 144, "Job confessing his presumption to God"; one on p. 264, No. 85, "Job and his three Daughters"; one on p. 265, No. 97, "Every one also gave him a piece of money"), and his lists do not include the well-known tempera of Satan tormenting Job (now in Tate Gallery and reproduced by Keynes, p. 180).

[1] There are many instances of this, and it is the more remarkable when we consider the vivid imagery in almost all his writings. If it is true that his pictures are literary and poetical in character it is equally true that his poems are pictorial. But his illustrations seldom literally portray the visions raised in the mind by his accompanying verse. When they do it is almost always to add something new. For an early example note "The Blossom," and also "The Divine Image," "S. I." In these designs the forked and lambent growths doubtless symbolise the earthly or vegetable life soaring upwards and touched with flame, the "divine essence." (For treatment of this subject *vide infra*, Illus, xvii, p. 184.)

[2] "I saw Milton in imagination. And he told me to beware of being misled by his Paradise Lost. In particular he wished me to show the falsehood of his doctrine that the pleasures of *sex* arose from the fall. The fall could not produce any pleasure." "H. C. R. Diary," 17th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 263).

in a poem or picture, but I declined. I said I had my own duties to perform." [1] And probably the completion of these engravings were among the duties he was actually performing at the time.[2] Their nature was twofold. They were the interpretation and even "correction" of the Book of Job as seen by a "Christian Visionary" [3] but they became in the end something more.

It is obvious the first time we look at it that Blake's Job is not a mere set of illustrations to the Bible story. Both the selection of incidents and the often astonishing conception of them stamps them at once as the work of independent and creative genius. But the more we study them the more clear it becomes that they are something other than the most highly imaginative handling of the story could produce. The casting out of Satan in a Judgment scene by Christ, who is glorified in the next illustration, and still more the introduction of a Satanic Jehovah in the eleventh illustration suggest that we are deeply involved in Blake's system. If we are not actually concerned with the great Blake myth of the prophetic books we are clearly in the system which the myth embodies. And though, apart from such episodes, there are comparatively few definite departures from scripture, and all the illustrations are introduced by a text from the Book of Job, almost every plate is filled with such things as pagan cairns, gothic temples or other features that are conspicuously more Blakean than Biblical. The more we study the work the more Blake we find in it, until at last we realise that he has so worked over the story, so filled it with his own symbolism, so moulded it to his

[1] "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 295).

[2] As we have seen, Blake had only just finished (if he had finished) work on the Job when he met H. C. R. and, unless the vision had occurred within the last month, he was still busy with the plates.

[3] Symons, p. 267.

own system, that it has become a better expression of his fundamental thought than any other work from his hand.[1] It gives us indeed not only a grand and original version of the Job legend but a beautiful expression of the Artist's maturest mind. At a time when he had finally abandoned all effort to reach his public through literary expression [2] he created almost accidentally a great Blakean dramatic poem built of pictures that can be made to speak.

This twofold achievement becomes even more wonderful when it is realised that the work is a glorious justification in mature age of the wildly penned paradoxes of youth. In the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" Blake was a Samson smiting the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. In the Job he has become a voice making beautiful the wilderness to uplift the lowly and bow down the proud. But the burden of his prophetic song is the war cry of his youth: "Your Hell is Heaven, your Heaven Hell." To hear and understand is to search our hearts with the question whether in all but our very highest moments we do not habitually worship some kind of Satan for our God and flee as utter destruction the Power of Salvation.

I

The reader will already have asked certain questions which we shall now attempt to answer. *Why* did Blake choose a method

[1] "The Book of Job as Blake transformed it became an expression (now that Mr Wicksteed has unriddled it, perhaps the clearest expression) of the characteristic Blakean conflict between "nature" and "imagination" or between corporeal and spiritual."—*The Nation*, 17th Dec. 1910.

[2] "He will not print any more," "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 268). *Cp.* "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 302).

calculated to hide rather than to reveal his meaning? *How* does interpretation give explicit meaning to the pictures? *What* do the pictures actually say when they speak? The Why and the How will be dealt with in the present section. The What, as involving the whole subject of Blake's treatment of the Job story, will have a section to itself. In a concluding section we shall attempt some summary and estimate of Blake's achievement.

It is impossible to say when Blake first began to use symbolic devices in his designs or when he began to use them with the deliberate intention of conveying definite ideas. In a late manuscript he says, speaking of a great picture of the Last Judgment; "I entreat then that the spectator will attend to the hands and feet; to the lineaments of the countenance: they are all descriptive of character, and not a line is drawn without intention, and that most discriminate and particular." [1]

But I find it difficult to believe that the designs in a very early work such as the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" were expected to be understood. As a matter of fact they come to have a real value as interpreting the text when the symbolism of the Job (naturally a little modified in the thirty years' interval) is applied to them, so that I cannot doubt its existence even at this early period.[2] But if he had really intended or expected it to be followed it is surely inconceivable that he should have taken no steps whatever to explain or even call attention to it. For, unlike the prophetic books, and even the "Songs of Experience," it is impossible to

[1] "V. L. J.," Gilchrist, ii. p. 193.

[2] *Vide* "The Method of William Blake," *Quest*, April 1912, by J. H. Wicksteed, an extract from which will be found below, Appendix G. In the small engraved booklet (reproduced in Keynes) "All Religions Are One," the divine persons may be distinguished from the human by the advance of right or left feet respectively. This booklet possibly antedates even the "Songs of Innocence" (Keynes, p. 95).

accuse most of the "Marriage" of showing a desire to be obscure. It has in fact been admirably described as *burning* its message into the reader's mind. The matter becomes a subtle question of psychology. Blake was intensely conscious of his mastership,[1] and felt himself under the sternest obligation to futurity to record his visions,[2] and he was clearly chagrined at receiving from his contemporaries so scant a measure of recognition.[3] But, while he continued to set forth in forms which would not expose them to vulgar criticism, those ideas of truth and beauty for which he was sure of the applause of the angels (or, in some moods, the devils), I suspect that he always deliberately kept large areas of

[1] "I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive. In my brain are studies and chambers filled with books and pictures . . . and those works are the delight and study of archangels." (Letter to Flaxman, 21st Sept. 1800. Russell, p. 76.)

[2] *Vide* remarkable letter to Butts, of 10th Jan. 1802. "I find on all hands great objections to my doing anything but the mere drudgery of business. . . . But if we fear to do the dictates of our angels and tremble at the tasks set before us; if we refuse to do spiritual acts because of natural fears or natural desires, who can describe the dismal torments of such a state! I too well remember the threats I heard! 'If you, who are organised by Divine Providence for spiritual communion, refuse, and bury your talent in the earth, even though you should want natural bread, sorrow and desperation pursue you through life, and after death, shame and confusion of face to eternity. Everyone in eternity will leave you, aghast at the man who was crowned with glory and honour by his brethren, and betrayed their cause to their enemies. You will be called the base Judas who betrayed his friend!' Such words would make any stout man tremble, and how then could I be at ease?" (Russell, pp. 99-101).

[3] I think the most explicit utterance of a wish to be understood is the one quoted on p. 48—"I entreat then that the spectator will attend," etc., but his disappointment at not being appreciated by his contemporaries is betrayed constantly in his letters and epigrams. I quote a very temperate instance of his last days: "I thank you for the pains you have taken with poor Job. I know too well that the great majority of Englishmen are fond of the indefinite." Letter to George Cumberland, 12th April 1827 (Russell, p. 221), in reply to a letter in which the Job illustrations were said to be "too much finished or over-elaborated for his Bristol friends, as they think." Letter to Linnell, 15th March 1827 (Russell, p. 220).

his mind in reserve, to be expounded only on condition of their being appreciated. He concludes the "Marriage" with the remark that a certain "Angel, who is now become a Devil, is my particular friend; we often read the Bible together in its infernal or diabolical sense, which the world shall have *if they behave well.*[1] I have also the 'Bible of Hell,' which the world shall have whether they will or no."

The world, of course, did not behave well, with the result that the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell," one of the most brilliant pieces of writing in the language, set in one of the most beautiful pieces of letter-press engraving and design ever produced, only exists for us in less than a dozen copies,[2] which were perhaps all that ever existed and sufficient to satisfy the demand of his contemporaries. But Blake, working for his own delight, probably continued to develop and refine his symbolism until he seems to *think* his designs in their correct symbolical attitudes.[3] Sometimes he speaks as though almost in pique he had become intentionally obscure. It is as though he said to his public that the wealth of heaven which he was prepared to bestow upon them had been so little appreciated that in future none but the very elect should have opportunity to receive it; and he seems to have believed that a drastic test of their intelligence would sort out the spiritually minded from the crowd and enable him to address himself entirely

[1] "M. H. H.," p. 24. Italics mine.

[2] *Vide* Keynes' "Bibliography."

[3] "Those wonderful originals seen in my visions were some of them one hundred feet in height; . . . all containing mythological and recondite meaning, where more is meant than meets the eye." (Descriptive Catalogue, No. ii., Gilchrist, ii. p. 141.) But he was not a slave to his original vision, and there are instances in the Job of his reversing an old invention to suit the symbolism of the new composition. (*Cp.* "Europe," p. 13, with Illus. 3 (*vide* p. 25 *supra*) and "The Method of William Blake," *Quest*, April 1912, J. H. Wicksteed, Appendix G *infra*.)

to the best of every age. In July 1803 [1] he writes of a poem by which he hopes his troubles may come "to be a memento in time to come and to speak to future generations by a sublime allegory," and he adds: "Allegory addressed to the intellectual powers, while it is altogether hidden from the corporeal understanding, is my definition of the most sublime poetry."

At the time he doubtless had in mind the great myth of the prophetic books, but as these were probably never read by anyone during his lifetime (there is only one coloured copy of the "Jerusalem" known) [2] he finally abandoned every attempt to reach any earthly public at all with his writings.[3] But he evidently long cherished a hope that his pictures might be minutely studied [4] and interpreted, and we may perhaps attribute the great wealth and beauty of the Job symbolism not exclusively to his own need for expression but to a distant hope that it would some day be understood. Like many another poet he was probably quite unconscious of the depths of his own obscurity, and, though he intended his meaning to be decently covered, he probably had not the least idea how far down it lay concealed, and how little trace of its presence he had left on the surface. However, there is no question that in unravelling the symbolism we become privileged watchers of a sublime craftsman working primarily for his own peace of soul. What we understand—when we do understand it—was probably not set down in order that it might

[1] Letter to Butts, 6th July 1803 (Russell, p. 121).

[2] *Vide* Keynes.

[3] "He will not print any more. I write, he says, when commanded by the spirits, and the moment I have written I see the words fly about the room in all directions. It is then published and the spirits can read. My MSS. [are] of no further use. I have been tempted to burn my MSS., but my wife won't let me." ("H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826. Symons, p. 268. *Cp.* "Reminiscences," Symons, p. 302.)

[4] *Vide supra*, p. 48.

be understood so much as because it appealed as beautiful and true to the wise and beautiful mind of a spiritual recluse.

And yet, after all, the symbolism of the Job is fairly simple and, if we begin at the beginning, fairly obvious. It is all connected with the relations of "the two worlds," the discourse about which so bored Crabb Robinson in his last conversations with Blake, a fact perhaps not altogether to be wondered at.[1] The two worlds are the inner and the outer world or, more simply, body and spirit,[2] and the reason why Blake needed a symbolism to distinguish them was that he was committed by his artistic [3] and philosophical [4] theories to represent them on paper as identical in appearance. The spiritual world is seen in vision and is for the artist or seer like the material world, but, if one may so express it, very much more so. "A spirit and a Vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing: they are organised and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better lineaments, and in stronger and better light, than his perishing and mortal eye can see, does not imagine at all." [3]

Now a device for symbolically distinguishing the two lay to

[1] "Among the unintelligible sentiments which he was continually expressing is his distinction between the natural and the spiritual world." "H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 257).

"The same half crazy crotchets about the two worlds,—the eternal repetition of which must in time become tiresome." "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 264).

Cp. "His distinction between the Natural and Spiritual worlds was very confused." "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 289).

[2] *Vide* Illus. ii, pp. 93 *f.*

[3] Descriptive Catalogue, No. iv. (Gilchrist, ii. p. 153). *V. infra*, note 1, p. 97.

[4] *Cp.* "A. R. O." "The Body or Outward Form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius," etc. (Sampson, 1913, p. 427. Keynes, p. 95, and Plate).

his hand and probably appeared so obvious to him that he may never have consciously invented it at all. The right hand, as the one that held the brush, pen, pencil or graver, was in direct relation with the brain—the seat of Paradise in Blake's "Human-Divine" system.

> "Daughters of Beulah! Muses who inspire the Poet's Song,
> . . . . . .
> . . . . Come into my hand
> By your mild power; descending down the Nerves of my right arm
> From out the Portals of my Brain, where, by your ministry,
> The Eternal Great Humanity Divine planted his Paradise." [1]

The right hand, therefore, is connected with Poetry, Paradise, Vision. But he says: "All this Vegetable World" (vegetable, because that is the lower form of life) "appeared on my left Foot." [2] When in the same work (the "Milton") he wishes to represent his dead brother Robert as his own spiritual self he reverses a design in which his left foot is stretched forward so as to make it a right foot in his spiritual counterpart.[3] And I believe it to be by a similar device that he distinguishes Job from his "Poetic Genius" [4] in the present work, the earthly image from that with which he is to all appearance identical (*cp.* for example, Job and Jehovah in Illus. 2 and elsewhere). The right side and the left, the hands and the feet, are the notes on his pipe, notes so easily played and so wonderfully to be combined with those of other symbolical instruments that in the end Blake found himself

[1] "M[n].," p. 3, ll. 1-8.
[2] "M[n].," p. 19, l. 12.
[3] *Cp.* "M[n].," p. 29, with *ib.* p. 33.
[4] The engraved booklet, "All Religions are One," represents the Poetic Genius, like Jehovah in Illus. 14 (*vide* Keynes, Plate between pp. 94 and 95).

in command of a many-sided device whose effect is truly orchestral. A further discussion of this interesting symbolism, of its discovery and various confirmations, will be found at the end of the volume.[1] We need only repeat here that, for a mind like Blake's, the right side seemed so obviously and for so many reasons the more spiritual that the symbolism may have grown up almost without consideration. The New Testament figure, for instance, of Christ dividing the sheep from the goats and putting the former on his right and the latter on his left hand may have had an even stronger appeal to the symbolist in Blake than the right hand being the pen hand, for it is connected with another of his fundamental symbolical and spiritual conceptions.

The sun's diurnal motion, although seldom directly referred to, clearly had immense significance for Blake. He calls it the "current of creation," and it is connected in his mind with the ultimate redemption of evil.[2] As the sun sinks only to rise again, what appears evil may be only a passage on the way to good.[3]

In the several extant designs of the Last Judgment the lost are always seen falling on Christ's left and the redeemed arising on his right, which is in harmony with the conception of right as spiritual and left as carnal. But it also shows as far as it goes a clockwise motion, and if Christ be regarded as the sun in the zenith, it is analogous to the diurnal motion of the heavens. It is true that the circle is broken both at top and bottom, and I am sure that Blake never conceived it necessary for the individual,

[1] Appendix A.

[2] *Vide* blank verse lines in preface to Chapter IV. of "Jerusalem" (p. 77).

[3] "To be an error and to be cast out is a part of God's design." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195). *Cp.* "for all things are so constructed/And builded by the Divine hand that the sinner shall always escape." "Jm.," 31, ll. 30, 31.

when once Paradise had been attained at the zenith, to return into nature's round and descend into the nadir. But it is demonstrable that he did conceive the circle to be complete at the bottom, and, although we do not ascend to fall, he actually describes, and he must have believed, that we do *descend to rise*.[1]

This again is connected with his great conception of Innocence and Experience. I do not know whether this appears anywhere complete before the finale of the Job. But the idea of the acquiring of Experience necessitating the embodiment and rejection of error characterises Blake's work at every stage in some form.[2] For Blake holds that we cannot reject evil until *someone*

[1] *Cp.* Note 3, p. 54, and also *vide* Figure of Los in the beginning of "Four Zoas," explained in Appendix A, *infra* p. 216, also Blake's Title-page, *infra* p. 87.

It is interesting to compare Blake in this way with the mediæval judgment pictures. These, too, including Michael Angelo's, with which Blake was probably familiar, represent the redeemed ascending on the Saviour's right, and the lost descending on his left. There is not of course any suggestion here of a complete circle. But occasionally one sees something that seems to suggest a combination of the clockwise motions of the heavens with the judgment motion. In the sculpture round the rose window on the West front of San Zeno in Verona, for instance, the Saviour sits at the top while angels fly down from his left and all round ascending on his right. Blake may possibly have seen something like this, but it is more probable that the ideas arose independently.

[2] Examples from works of several different periods will suffice to prove this. (1) In the "Marriage" we get the idea in its cruder form: "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom," "If the fool would persist in his folly, he would become wise" ("M. H. H." p. 7). (2) In a proposed motto for the "Songs of Innocence and Experience" (Sampson, p. 175) Blake describes Experience as a process of sifting good and evil, which seems to anticipate in a more fanciful form the *fixing systems to deliver individuals* of Jerusalem: "Till Experience teaches them to *catch and to cage* the Fairies & Elves" (italics mine), by which process good and evil are at last distinguished, "and the Eagle is known from the Owl." (3) In the "Four Zoas" MS. the idea is more developed: "All mortal things made permanent that they may be put off" (*cp* "Vala," viii. 475). (4) In Jerusalem it appears to be mainly intellectual, and consists in "making states permanent" and in "fixing systems" to "deliver individuals" from these states and systems.

It is here part of the work of redemption to compel false systems to become

has experienced or lived it and so proved it evil,[1] and it may be, therefore, that the sinner is the saviour of mankind, enduring all the inevitable misery that sin brings that he may become a warning or beacon to save others from the like.[2] Job himself is conceived at first as deeply in error, which is the meaning attached to his being put into the power of Satan. The patriarch and his wife are seen as shadowy images in Satan's flame when he first appears (Illus. 2). It is by going through with his error to the bitter end that he at last completely embodies or "experiences" it, and when Satan is finally cast out at the judgment seat of Christ (Illus. 16), there go with him not the shadowy images of the patriarchal pair but their fully bodied forth selves.[3] This is the

explicit. "Giving a body to Falsehood, that it may be cast off for ever" ("J[m].," p. 12, l. 13). "That he who will not defend truth may be compelled to defend a Lie" ("J[m].," p. 9, 29-30, and repeated "M[n].," p. 6, ll. 47-8). Or in one of those still more whimsical Blakean utterances: "Go thou to Skofield: ask him if he is Bath or if he is Canterbury. Tell him to be no more dubious: demand explicit words" ("J[m].," p. 17, ll. 59-60). And an interesting passage on p. 49 of "J[m].," concludes (ll. 70 and 71):

> "Because the Evil is Created into a State, that Men
> May be delivered time after time evermore. Amen."

The idea is also quite explicit, though in a somewhat different form, in such a passage as "J[m].," p. 90, 35-38, which explains the nature of the Redemption as conceived by Blake:—

> ". . . by his Maternal Birth he is that Evil-One
> And his Maternal Humanity must be put off Eternally
> Lest the Sexual Generation swallow up Regeneration
> Come Lord Jesus take on thee the Satanic Body of Holiness."

Other refs.: "J[m].," p. 11, l. 5; p. 25, l. 13; p. 55, l. 65, etc.

[1] "If others had not been foolish we should be so." "M. H. H.," p. 9. *Cp.* "V. L. J.," in passage quoted below, *v.* next page, *infra* note 1.

[2] Poem, p. 77, "Jerusalem."

[3] Messrs Ellis and Yeats, in the Quaritch Blake ("E. Y.," i. p. 134), mistook these figures for "Sin and Death," and describes them as "two female figures," and in the

rejection of error and the entrance to Paradise, and in Illus. 18 it is used as an instrument of admission for the three misguided friends, showing that the pit of error does not need to be fully plumbed by us all if we can accept the experience of others.[1]

I suspect that the diurnal motion, like the spirituality of the right side, was always present in Blake's mind. But there is another symbolic device to distinguish the inner and outer worlds which must, I think, be somewhat rare except in the Job. This is the use of the cloud belt, which, in almost every design, separates earth and heaven. "What is Above," says Blake, "is Within," [2] and there is scarcely one plate in the series where the clouds are not used either in the design or the margin with refined and sometimes decisive significance.[3] The twentieth illustration is the only one entirely without clouds, and their absence here is as significant as their presence elsewhere. It is doubtless meant to convey the fact that Job, in his hour of innermost regeneration, cannot be defined as either in earth or heaven, for the two are no longer separable.

But when all is said about other symbolic devices the fact remains that the subtle and refined use of the right and left symbolism is the distinguishing feature of the Job illustrations

classical description of the designs in Gilchrist's "Life" (contributed by D. G. Rossetti) they might almost be inferred to be "Hell and Destruction" (i. p. 332), which are referred to in the marginal text. But those familiar with Blake's ideas on the embodiment and casting forth of error cannot fail to recognise in them the fully corporealised figures of Job and his wife first seen in Satan's flame as shadowy images in Illus. 2.

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 197). "These represent those who, though willing, were too weak to reject error without the assistance and countenance of those already in the truth: for a man can only reject error by the advice of a friend, or by the immediate inspiration of God."

[2] "Jm.," p. 71, l. 6.

[3] The only reference which I know in his writings is "V. L. J."—"The rolling cloud which separates the wicked from the seats of bliss" (Gilchrist, ii. p. 197).

regarded, if one may say so, as literature. By its means not only are the good and evil things in Job's life distinguished, but his acts are characterised, his states of mind subtly described, his relations to his wife, his children, his friends, to God, to Satan, to earth and heaven are all expressed clearly and sometimes with exquisite delicacy of meaning and suggestion. So that, however little we may begin by liking a purely mechanical device for expressing psychological ideas in art, we have to admit in the end that Blake has invented an instrument which, unsuitable as it may be for imitation, he himself uses with a mastership that only exalts his genius.[1] If he fails to carry conviction in describing as the most sublime poetry something "altogether hidden from the corporeal understanding," I find myself compelled to admit that when, after years of study, some half-hidden feature of the design or margin suddenly becomes expressive in relation to one or more of his main symbolisms, and thereby throws a shaft of light backward and forward, adding a new strand of beauty and spiritual meaning to the whole series, the artistic pleasure is not exactly paralleled in any other work. The explorer, however, should be warned that, though the whole meaning of the Job will probably never be exhausted—like Shakespeare, Blake will always keep untapped stores of beauty for every new pilgrim to his shrines—yet there never was, perhaps, an artist so prolific of false lights. For every true beacon there are a dozen will-o'-the-wisps, and though a whole generation of students has laboured and still labours not in vain to build and broaden a safe way, the swamps to right and left are filled with bones.[2]

[1] *Vide supra*, "By Way of Preface," pp. 14, 15.

[2] "Whoever," says Mr Ellis ("Poetical Works of William Blake," vol. ii. p. 238), "can so far recover from the fever of sympathy and enthusiasm into which the abund-

II

The story of Job which Blake found in the Authorised Version and with which, even in these days, we are all in more or less degree familiar, may be summarised as follows: Job, although a dweller in the land of Uz and not of Israel, is "perfect" and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. He possesses great wealth and a large family of sons and daughters, on whose behalf he is continually offering sacrifices to guard against the consequences of some secret infidelity on their part. On a certain day when Satan appears with the Sons of God before the Almighty, the Patriarch is instanced as a perfect man. But the accuser suggests that his piety is dependent on his wealth, and that he will renounce God if he loses it. So Satan is allowed to try for himself. But even after he has stripped him of all his possessions, including his children, Job says: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Even so Satan is not silenced. So long, he maintains, as the man himself escapes unscathed he has something to fear, and he worships God to save his "skin." "But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." So Satan is allowed to go to any lengths against his person, short of actually killing him, and he smites him "with sore boils from the sole of

ance of Blake's poetic gift of utterance throws us all,—a fever which, after more than thirty years of reading, still whirls the present editor often away from all critical anchorage"—and so forth. To this wonderfully frank confession of a veteran Blakist, I would like humbly to append my own confession by way of warning. If ever I have allowed myself to arrive at a conclusion as to Blake's meaning before securing a second or even a third converging line of confirmation, I have generally had cause to repent it, and it is seldom that I have put forth an interpretation that was not the survivor out of many tentative hypotheses.

his foot unto his crown." Even Job's wife now fails him, and tells him to "curse God and die." "What?" says Job, "shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" The three friends then appear, and for seven days sit by him in mute sympathy. So far the prose introduction.

With Chapter III the poem now begins, and we notice a change of atmosphere. It represents Job's bursting forth into bitter lamentations over his undeserved fate and cursing the day of his birth. For this Eliphaz rebukes him, declaring that misfortune is never undeserved. Job answers him, and each of the friends in turn, but the more he persists in upholding his righteousness the more vehement they become, and at last charge him recklessly with all manner of sins against his neighbour. "Is not thy wickedness great?" says Eliphaz in his third speech, "and thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing." Job then appeals from man to God. Would that he could find the seat of the Almighty himself, and there make his defence and "know the words which he would answer me." At this point a fourth friend, Elihu, is introduced, probably by a later writer, who insists that the power of God silences all question of his justice. Job is at all events wrong in appealing against the sentence of the Almighty and Inscrutable. Moreover, since God can have nothing to lose or gain by Job's actions, he cannot be motived by a vindictive spirit against him, and can only be influenced by pure justice. The great climax of the drama is thus reached, when the Deity himself appears in the whirlwind and charges Job with presumption, overwhelming him by the tale of his power and wisdom in Nature. The poem ends by

Job's confessing his folly and repenting "in dust and ashes." In a prose epilogue the friends are rebuked and commanded to offer sacrifices of bullocks and rams, while Job is approved and allowed to intercede on their behalf. After this his relatives and friends bring him money, and he is restored to greater prosperity than ever, becoming the father of seven sons and three daughters as before.

This story has the typical characteristic of epic literature, that it does not speak with a single voice.[1] The prose introduction is not entirely of a piece even with the prose epilogue, and both are, in different degrees, divergent in spirit from the main poem. The poem, apart from splendid interpolations like Chapter XXVIII, which has no close relation to the general theme, bears the impress of at least two minds, the Elihu speeches being clearly an addition intended to correct the suggestion which the main poem leaves uppermost—that suffering may not, after all, be the direct consequence of sin.

This diversity of tongues presented Blake with his problem, but also with his opportunity. He sets to work without knowing —and all the better for not knowing—the exact nature of his task which was to see some dominant idea below all the various strata. His success, as one would expect, is not in seeing what any one of

[1] "It has been thought that the descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan [Job], 40, v. 6—41, v. 34, are later additions to the book—the prologue (i., ii.) and epilogue, 42, vv. 7-17, have likewise been regarded as the work of later hands; they are in prose while the rest of the book is in poetical form. . . . More serious doubts attach to [Job], 32-37. The speeches of Elihu . . . [Job], 27, vv. 11-23, are also quite unsuitable to the argument of Job, they prove what he has been denying and the friends asserting, that the wicked always suffer an evil fate . . . [Job], 28. This chapter forms by itself one of the most beautiful poems in the Old Testament, but it has no connection with its present context;" and so forth. These extracts are from Prof. Weatherall's manual "The Books of the Old Testament," pp. 107 *ff*.

the ancient writers saw, for he alters or misunderstands them all in turn, but something new and very much his own, yet by its means he gathers into his orchestra the instruments of many masters.

It will be noticed that there is one idea common to every strand in the story. It is taken for granted that the normal if not the necessary sign of God's favour is material wealth. Possibly the original story was intended to shake this idea but, if so, later contributors did their best to re-establish it. An even more archaic idea is the belief that atonement for actual or possible sin can be made by the slaughter and sacrifice of animals. Job practises this before, and his friends (by divine command), after his disasters. In "correcting" these conceptions and reinterpreting the story accordingly, Blake may perhaps be regarded as merely following the later Jewish and Christian traditions. But he is scarcely less opposed to ideas that are far more essential to the genius of the original. Outward nature was for Blake purely Satanic,[1] and God was essentially inward and human.[2] Yet much of the finest poetry in the Book of Job is descriptive of Jehovah as the Lord of Nature. Indeed the conception was too vital a part of the original to be contradicted by Blake. He cannot ignore it, and in treating it he reaches the very top of his genius as a visionary artist, giving us, in Illus. 13, 14, and 15, a series which perhaps more than any other of his works have secured him an abiding place among the masters.

But though he treats the theme so splendidly as to make it

[1] "Nature is the work of the Devil." "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 265). Etc. etc.

[2] "I am not a God afar off, I am a brother and friend:
Within your bosoms I reside and you reside in me." ("Jm.," p. 4, ll. 18, 19), etc.

the artistic climax of the book it is not allowed to represent the poetic or philosophic climax. It is only conceived as a prelude to the fourfold state of bliss which is introduced by the indwelling Christ and in which Job ends his days. In this case, Blake achieves the great feat of sweeping up the magnificent Hebraic transcendentalism into his own unyielding immanentalism. And one is compelled to recognise an added glory in both.

But there is something still deeper in the original which Blake could not do anything less than "correct" away. "Mystery" is for him anathema,[1] although the soul of the book of Job is its quite unsolved mystery, the mystery of suffering goodness. Possibly the original poet made no attempt to solve it, and it is very questionable whether the attempt of the writer or writers of the prose setting does not weaken the work from the point of view both of poetry and philosophy, however it may enhance it as drama. The prose setting tells us that Jehovah deliberately handed over a faultlessly good man to Satan, nor surely is our sense of justice satisfied by learning that he afterwards makes such amends to him as are then possible; supplying him with fresh flocks and herds and a new set of sons and daughters. Dramatic as the story thus becomes the naked mystery left unsolved was surely greater poetry. But Blake's business as a thinker and an artist was to unriddle the universe, and he reads

[1] *E.g.* The Human Abstract. "S. E."

> "Soon spreads the dismal shade
> Of Mystery over his head;
> And the Caterpillar and Fly
> Feed on the Mystery."

"V. L. J." "Beneath these is the seat of the harlot, named Mystery in the Revelations" (Gilchrist, ii. p. 190), etc.

the introduction in a way to give it very profound meaning on his own lines of thought.

His solution of the *mystery* of evil is the *subtlety* of error. The best man so far as outward act is concerned may actually be as complete a victim of Satan as the worst by being subtly wrong in his thought, for "thought *is* act."[1]

It is not in consequence of a bargain made by the Almighty but of something deeply in the nature of man that the ideas of "perfection" and of "good and evil" are destructive of his soul. For perfection implies separation. The *part* is not perfect except in the whole, and each man is only a part. Nevertheless the soul, because it *is* part of the whole, is self-redemptive, and by going through with his error as Job does a man may win through to a new understanding and so reach a state of spiritual prosperity that reverberates far down into the mortal life.

In the poem Blake has the assistance of one of the ancient writers themselves. For, though Jehovah in the main work makes no accusation of sin against Job and clearly repudiates the accusations of the three friends, the fourth friend, Elihu, was introduced by another poet to re-establish the theme of Job's guilt.[2] Blake seizes this episode and makes it the turning-point of the story. By a highly characteristic misreading of one of Elihu's remarks he convicts Job of a typically Blakean error, and

[1] "Bacon" (Gilchrist, i. p. 316). *Cp.* "Mental things are alone real," "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 200).

[2] "There can be no reasonable doubt," says Canon Driver, that "the speeches of Elihu" are "not part of the original poem of Job: they are the addition of a writer who desired to develop certain considerations which did not seem to him to have been sufficiently emphasised by the three friends." ("The Book of Job in the Revised Version," edited by S. R. Driver, D.D., etc. (Oxford), p. 93.)

gives a new coherence to the very composite and many-stranded epic. He rightly interprets Elihu as considering Job's sufferings to be in the nature of a cleansing purgatory, and even his main contention that God's justice precludes the idea of Job's innocence is understood and endorsed. It is a supporting argument to this thesis which he misinterprets. Elihu says that it is impossible God should have any motive other than pure justice because he is removed from the possibility of either benefit or injury at Job's hands. "If thou sinnest what doest thou against him, or if thou art righteous what givest thou unto him?" Blake, in quoting these words in the margin of the twelfth design, certainly understood them, not as showing that God must have a disinterested desire to punish sin, but as showing that God takes no interest in either sin or righteousness, which were for Blake radically false conceptions.[1]

Ever since his "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" and his "Songs of Experience" (both written more than thirty years before), he had been resolute to show a harmony in the sum of things which should explain the place of all that which we falsely conceive as evil. He is essentially a system maker. "I must Create a

[1] "Good and Evil are no more!" "The Everlasting Gospel" (Sampson, 1913, p. 155).

"Here they are no longer talking of what is good and evil, or of what is right or wrong, and puzzling themselves in Satan's labyrinth; but are conversing with eternal realities, as they exist in the human imagination." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 196).

"He [Plato] knew of nothing but the Virtues and Vices. There is nothing in all that. Everything is good in God's Eyes.—On my asking whether there is nothing absolutely evil in what man does, he answered 'I am no judge of that—perhaps not in God's eyes.' Notwithstanding this he, however, at the same time spoke of error as being in heaven." "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 288). Note this contrast between Evil and Error.

Cp. "I care not whether a Man is Good or Evil; all that I care/Is whether he is a Wise Man or a Fool. Go! put off Holiness/And put on Intellect" ("Jm.," 91, 54-56).

System or be enslav'd by another Man's,"[1] he says. And his system was not framed to show that Hell does not exist, but that "Hell is open'd to Heaven."[2] Hell being at worst a state of error not of sin.

With infinite sympathy, therefore, he sets out to reveal Job's error, and to explain how the man who seemed "perfect" in life and thought was actually body and soul in Satan's power. "Devils," he says, "are False Religions,"[3] and he shows Job as a helpless victim of Satanic ideas, that could only be worked out of his soul by fiercest suffering and distress.[4] And, when once we understand his method and accept his philosophical basis, Blake shows us with almost Shakespearean inevitableness the many-channelled course of error to despair.

But despair is not for Blake the end. And if the first half of the book is great as tragedy—tragedy in which he remorselessly castigates the base ideas and ideals of his day—the latter half rises to that heavenly Comedy which lifts us into a paradise of enduring good.

We may now take a brief survey of his story of Job as reimagined and set forth in the illustrations. The first ten, which deal with Job's disasters, would not appear to the casual spectator to stand in need of any very profound explanation. Cursorily considered they are reasonably close illustrations to the Bible story. But, as it is quite impossible to understand Blake's glorious spiritual conceptions embodied in his vision of Job's recovery, unless we understand the exact nature of the previous disasters, we must scrutinise even the earlier illustrations for every suggestion that will open the way into the artist's subtler meanings.

[1] "Jm.," p. 10, l. 20.
[2] "Jm.," p. 77, blank verse poem.
[3] "Jm.," p. 77, top of page.
[4] *Cp.* Illus. xx., note 2, p. 203.

The First Illustration represents the life of Job as it appears outwardly to the world and indeed to himself; rich upon the right hand and upon the left in every blessedness of soul and body. In the Second Illustration we see Job's inner life represented above the clouds, where Satan and Jehovah contend for mastery. Jehovah appears serene enough and his empire extends to earth, where his angels attend on the patriarch and his family. But in point of fact we may see that Satan has a deadly power over God which already disturbs the peace of heaven. As will appear, Job's vast material wealth and his pride of well-doing are not his glory but his undoing. And the first part of the drama illustrates the text, "All that he *hath* is in thy power," that is to say spiritually they are Satan's.

The Third Illustration shows the Satanic character of the patriarchal family. It is described by Blake's words in his "Jerusalem": "Thy cruel Patriarchal pride Planting thy Family alone Destroying all the World beside," [1] and we see Satan working his will upon Job's sons and their wives.[2] But in the Fourth Illustration, though Job hears in rapid succession of the loss of all his possessions and of his family, he still worships God, as is indicated by the Gothic temple in the background.

Having failed to defeat Job through his possessions, Satan applies for power to act against the individual; he must have power to touch the man himself in order to defeat him. And now the subtler meanings of the designs begin to crowd upon us. In the Fifth Illustration Satan is endowed with a fuller commission and we see that his power immediately extends over Heaven,

[1] "Jm.," p. 27, v. 20.

[2] Mr Damon's conception of this Illustration differs somewhat from mine, but the two points of view are not inconsistent. *Vide supra*, pp. 35 and 36.

where Jehovah and the angels become touched by his torments. It is not Blake's intention to show Job as doing wrong things and thus bringing himself to destruction, but to show his very goodness as falsified by his thought. Describing how devils ("false religions")[1] "torment the just" in Hell, he says, "he who performs works of mercy in any shape whatever is punished and if possible destroyed,—not through envy, hatred or malice, but through self-righteousness that thinks it does God service, which god is Satan."[2] Job accordingly is destroyed by his "charity" to the poor. Elsewhere Blake has spoken in sufficiently scathing terms of the almsgiving of the rich, and of the meagre doles of charity by which he considered they bolstered up a society so greatly advantageous to themselves.[3] Here he enforces the

[1] "Jm.," p. 77.

[2] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 199).

[3] "Compell the poor to live upon a Crust of bread by soft mild arts;
So shall we gove[r]n over all: let Moral duty tune your tongue;
But be your hearts harder than the nether millstone.
Smile when they frown, frown when they smile; and when a man looks pale
With labour & abstinence say he looks healthy & happy.
And when his children sicken, let them die; there are enough
Born, even too many, & our Earth will be overrun
Without these arts. If you would make the poor live with temper,
With pomp give every crust of bread you give, with gracious cunning
Magnify small gifts: reduce the man to want a gift, & then give with pomp,
Say he smiles if you hear him sigh. If pale, say he is ruddy.
Preach temperance. Say he is overgorg'd, & drowns his wit
In strong drink; tho' you know that bread & water are all
He can afford. Flatter his wife: pity his children; till we can
Reduce all to our will, as spaniels are taught with art."

(The "Four Zoas," as quoted by Sampson, pp. 350-351), *cp.* "Vala," vii. ll. 117-129.

"And Los prayed and said, O Divine Saviour arise
Upon the Mountains of Albion as in ancient time, Behold!

spiritual nature of the error by making the outward act entirely noble and heroic. But "thought *is* act," [1] and Blake symbolically [2] shows that Job conceives the act as having *merit*. There is no merit for the true member of Christ in sharing "what is common to all in [his] kingdom," [3] and in the eyes of heaven it may be just as meritorious in the beggar to receive as in Job to give. Indeed in the final purgation of Job's soul he is to learn how the position of the recipient of charity may be the last and sternest ordeal of brotherly love.

In the Sixth Illustration Blake shows by a very subtle piece of symbolism Job's spiritual loss of his wife. This is the climax of the "price of Experience," which "is bought with the price of all that a man hath, his house, his wife, his children." [4] There is good authority for regarding the boils as a spiritual disease.[5] But I suspect that Blake conceives Job as here afflicted (as in the Bible), [6] with actual physical disease as well. For Satan is re-

> The Cities of Albion seek thy face, London groans in pain,
> From Hill to Hill, & the Thames laments along the Valleys :
> The little Villages of Middlesex & Surrey hunger & thirst,
> The Twenty-eight Cities of Albion stretch their hands to thee :
> Because of the Opressors of Albion in every City & Village ;
> They mock at the Labourers limbs ! they mock at his starvd Children.
> They buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons :
> They compell the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mild arts ;
> They reduce the Man to want : then give with pomp & ceremony.
> The praise of Jehovah is chaunted from lips of hunger & thirst."
>
> ("Jm.," p. 30, ll, 21-32.)

[1] "Bacon" (Gilchrist, i. p. 316).

[2] *Vide* Illus. v.

[3] "Thornton," E. Y., vol. i. p. 126. Ellis, p. 367.

[4] "Four Zoas," *cp.* "Vala," ii. ll. 397 *ff.*

[5] "Jm.," p. 21, l. 4. "Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sin."

[6] I feel sure we are nearest Blake's thought when we do not reject the literal meanings but look behind them. To take examples from his early work I conceive

presented as more than half in the natural world (as Jehovah will be seen in the natural world in Illus. 13), and his inward poison of thought seems to be represented as pouring out its effects upon the corporeal man, Satan not being here entirely within.

The Seventh Illustration shows Job stripped of all that he loves and even of bodily health, yet able to bless God. Surely Satan is defeated. In the Hebrew original this is so, for, with the entrance of the friends, Satan disappears from the stage. But for Blake Satan, being essentially a state of mind,[1] can only be finally defeated when he is rooted out of the soul, and we shall see him twice in later illustrations. And yet for Blake, too, the friends now take the place of Satan in the drama and become the Accusers. In his proper person Satan could only carry the outworks. Job may lose all his dearest possessions but, if he still keeps his soul, Satan cannot wholly claim him. But friendship, as Blake knew by bitter experience, is the test of the soul itself,[2] and, in leaving the completion of the campaign to Job's friends,

the Lamb ("S. I.") to be a real and individual Lamb all the time; but behind every individual lamb is a vast region of spiritual poetry, which links it with the child, and this it is the poet's business to elucidate. Even the Tiger begins, I feel sure, as a Tiger that never quite ceased to be *there* for Blake even when he has travelled deep into the realm of mystic thought about Human Genius which the Tiger symbolises. So Job was ill. He had boils. But those boils were the manifestation of something in his soul that poisoned his flesh. So at least I read Blake's symphonic method. His vision is not first, second, third and fourth, but single, double, threefold and fourfold, each adding and including not replacing.

[1] "Satan is the State of Death." "J[m]," p. 49, l. 67.
"Albion hath enter'd the State Satan!" "J[m]," p. 35, l. 13, etc.

[2] *Vide* Illus. vii., pp. 129 *f.*

Cp. "And in the midst of the Great Assembly Palamabron prayd:
O God protect me from my friends, that they have not power over me.
Thou hast giv'n me power to protect myself from my bitterest enemies."
"M[a]," p. 7, ll. 4-6.

Satan is by no means releasing his hold, but rather using his deadliest forces to reach the citadel itself.

In the Eighth Illustration the sympathy of the friends (for to what other cause was it to be attributed) breaks down Job's fortitude,[1] turns him from patience to despair and from blessing God to cursing his day. This calls forth in the Ninth Illustration the stern rebuke of Eliphaz and the revelation of his own vision of Deity to confound Job and convict him of sin. Stung to retort by his ruthless and inhuman charges Job boldly declares in the Tenth Illustration that he is absolutely guiltless, that he has done nothing wrong, that he will be finally justified by God, and that he will trust the God he has ever trusted, even to the death.

But in this moment, when "to the corporeal understanding" Job seems to have reached a pinnacle of faith and patience, he is actually ploughing through the deepest pit of error, as the terrible picture of his soul in the next illustration shows. This as tragic poetry is Blake's masterpiece. The nature of Error is to make us think what is actually the worst the best. The spectator himself becomes a victim of Job's own illusion. We cannot see his error where it is most profound. And yet a little consideration of the designs immediately preceding makes it clear enough.

"Corporeal friends," Blake says, "are spiritual enemies,"[2] and these corporeal friends who come in the first place to express sympathy with Job's heartbreaking losses have become, quite logically and inevitably, efficient ministers of the Great Satan in him. By helping, even forcing, Job to concentrate his whole

[1] *Cp.* "For pity divides the soul." "Urizen," ch. v., verse 7.
"Pity divides the soul and man unmans." "M[n]," 6, 19-20.
[2] "J[m]," p. 30, l. 10, etc.
Cp. "Opposition is true Friendship." "M. H. H.," p. 20 (*vide* Keynes, p. 108).

attention upon his own deserts and his own spiritual state they have reduced him to a condition of exaggerated self-importance in which he actually conceives himself as in some special sense the object of God's attention, the centre of a cosmic drama, in which the Almighty himself is to play the part of his vindicator. This is the very pinnacle of "Self-Righteousness" which is none other than the Pit of Hell.[1] When, in the near sequel, God actually does vindicate Job, it is in a way to rebuke his attitude, as lust is rebuked by love.

Job's splendid but tragic pæan of self-justification is made at once more splendid and more tragic by the implicit faith of his appeal to his God, who is none other than himself, the Satanic Job. In the same passage as Blake describes how devils torment the just he speaks of their tormenting one another. They torment the just from hatred or envy, but "They do not envy one another: they contemn or despise one another."[2] And accordingly Job's passionate plea of self-defence and appeal to God is greeted by the Satanic friends with a storm of angry contempt. They recall Blake's title "Satan's Holy Trinity. The Accuser, the Judge, and the Executioner."[3] Even Job's wife, though she weeps for him, joins in the reproaches of the friends, and the earthly tragedy reaches a climax in a jangling crescendo of tears, of cries for mercy, of self-justification, of angry accusation and scorn. But worse is to appear. Job's prayer is to be answered. His God is to manifest himself, and in the following picture of his soul we are to see the Almighty as he has worshipped him.

[1] "Everyone sees the Last Judgment according to the position he holds." *Vide* "V. L. J." (last sentence). *Cp.* "M. H. H." "the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell" (p. 5).

[2] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 199).

[3] Gilchrist, ii. "Engravings," p. 279. *Cp. ib.* ii., No. 260, p. 253, and reproduction in Gilchrist, i. p. 304.

This is the Eleventh Illustration which brings us to the middle of the series and the lowest depth in the current of creation. And it is at this point that we begin to find the value, indeed the absolute necessity, of interpretation. This eleventh illustration is a purely Blakean conception, and only in so far as we have followed the track of Blakean ideas in the previous designs can it become the least intelligible. Job appears in the utter isolation which his creed logically brings him to. It is the only time in the book when he is alone with no human company. Devils grab him from below and, most terrible of all, his own spiritual self, the Great Satan, usurping the place of God, broods over his prostrate form and torments him with the horror of his creed. The exact meaning of the various symbols will be found in the text to Illus. 11, where we shall see that he is suspended between two Hells, the Hell of bodily, and the Hell of spiritual, selfishness.

Before proceeding to the Twelfth Illustration, which begins the ascent, we will pause to consider the structure of the work so far. The descent is in three parts of similar form, representing Satan's destruction of Job, first through his house and family, next through his wife and his health, thirdly through his friends and his faith itself.

Each group begins with Job on earth, in company with the principal actors, and in prayer or resignation. Each group has a central design showing God in Heaven, and each group ends with Satan triumphant. The first two groups are complete in these three designs, but the third requires five, for the theme is expanded. Job's outward condition, first seen as resignation, is followed by the picture of his despair and after the central vision of God (not, as before, of God's Job, but of Eliphaz's), the con-

demnation as again in two parts, first condemnation by Job's friends and wife, and finally by his own Satanic soul.

The form of the ascent is not exactly parallel. To make the two parts symmetrical we must regard Illus. 11 as the Nadir and as common to both. The second part is then perhaps best regarded as divided by the Judgment scene (Illus. 16), into two parts of five each, the first dealing with God in Nature and the second with God within the soul. But these groups are not symmetrical in themselves or similar to one another, though, as we shall see, each has its own definite structure, and there is a definite reason for the difference. What is important is to realise the different relation of the four parts to the whole. Up till Illus. 9 (the central design of what we may call Act 2) Job, though constantly surrounded by spiritual presences, has never seen them. It is only when Eliphaz speaks to him of God that he beholds him as an outward vision. This is the first turning point in Job's spiritual experience. But until the Last Judgment (the central design of the ascent) he sees only what he is shown, and the glorious visions of God in Nature from Illus. 13 to 15 are the sequel and expansion of the vision of the natural universe shown him by Elihu. But everything he sees after the Last Judgment is an immediate experience of his own, sprung from the inspiration of his own heart and realised in his own life.

This gives us the real clue to the fourfold structure of the book so characteristic of Blake. Instead of looking upon the first two groups as separate Acts we must now regard them as two scenes in the first Act. The work then divides itself symmetrically thus: i.-vi., Job loses the things of the earth; vii.-xi., Job loses the things of heaven; xi.-xv., Job, by the help of Elihu, recovers the things of earth in a new vision; xvi.-xxi., Job discovers the

things of heaven in the eternal vision. In the first Act he loses all he possesses, even his children, and, in a sense, his wife. In the second Act his own religion and that of his friends is revealed as utter destruction of soul. In the third Act Elihu opens his eyes to the glory of the outside universe displayed in the three following illustrations. But only a fourth Act can complete the theme. God may be found even in Nature,[1] but it is within and not in the outward order that his true being dwells. This can only be known after a Last Judgment, which is the rejection of Error,[2] and thus Illus. 16 opens the way to Paradise through Christ.

Returning to the illustrations we see by the margin of the twelfth that the crisis is past. This margin, as we shall see (Illus. xii.), is a wonderful symbolical summary of the fourfold[3] thesis of the drama and signifies that the ascent is begun.

[1] " God is within & without ! he is even in the depths of Hell ! " " J^m.," 12, l. 15.

[2] " V. L. J.," Gilchrist, ii. p. 196 (*vide* also Illus. xii., p. 153, etc.).

[3] It may probably be said that Blake wove his fourfold system into the whole book in one way more. In the first part (i.-vi.) the catastrophe is always single. Satan destroys the Sons in their vices (Illus. 3) or Job in his virtues (Illus. 6). In the second part (vii.-xi.) the catastrophe is twofold (Illus. 10 and 11). (Twofold vision is spiritual but cruel, *vide* earlier part of poem in Butts' letter quoted below.) In the third part (xi.-xv.), which describes a state of bliss, the vision is threefold (Illus. 13, 14, 15), and in the fourth part (xvi.-xxi.) the final beatitude is fourfold (Illus. 18, 19, 20, 21). I think there can be no doubt that the third and the fourth parts were planned to reach a threefold and a fourfold climax respectively, that is to show a threefold and a fourfold vision. The threefold vision he calls Beulah, which is Marriage (*vide* Note 3, p. 169 *infra*) and, I suppose, the same as what he calls " Holy Generation Image of re-generation." On extra page 3 of " M^n." (l. 5) he says, " The Sexual is Threefold : the Human is Fourfold." (*Cp.* " Humanity is far above Sexual organisation " "J^m.," p. 79, ll. 73-4.)

Cp. " Now I a fourfold vision see
And a fourfold vision is given to me ;
'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight,
And threefold in soft Beulah's night,

The natural world is deep in midnight, but with the storm and horror passed. Job's pride is rebuked and he is to learn that the Almighty does not visit the individual in the manner he had claimed, but that there may come in his stead "an Interpreter, One among a Thousand" of our fellow-men. Elihu comes, not in pity as the others did, but in wrath. "Opposition," says Blake, "is true Friendship."[1] By carrying Job's mind into the majestic natural universe he delivers him from the Pit of a religion of Selfhood.

Then, in the wonderful Thirteenth Illustration, Job suddenly discovers that to lay asleep that Self which is the source of all our woe is to become lord of the natural world itself, in our love and worship of an all-pervading Deity, essentially human and akin.

In the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Illustrations this new kingdom is explored; first within (the most glorious creation of Blake's genius) and then without. In the Sixteenth Illustration a Last Judgment, representing the casting out of error and with it of Self and Satan, prepares us for the Seventeenth Illustration, representing the ascent into Christ's inward Kingdom or Paradise. For we may "live in Paradise and Liberty" in spirit, "but not in

> And twofold always may God us keep
> From Single vision, & Newton's sleep!"
>
> Poem in Letter to Thos. Butts, 22nd Nov. 1802.
> Russell, pp. 111-112.

Nevertheless Beulah is a kind of Earthly Paradise or outer-court of Heaven; the Threefold (Sexual) becoming a part of the process that produces the Fourfold (Man). In "Jerusalem" we read how "when Man sleeps in Beulah" the Saviour creates Woman that "Himself may in process of time be born Man to redeem" ("J^{m}.," p. 42, ll. 32, 34). *Cp.* "O holy Generation . . . Birth place of the Lamb of God incomprehensible!" ("J^{m}.," p. 7, ll. 65, 68).

[1] "M. H. H.," p. 20. *Vide* Keynes, p. 108.

the mortal body . . . till after a Last Judgment,"[1] which is the rejection of Error.[2]

The Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-First Illustrations set forth this kingdom in its fourfold aspect, which, borrowing a more modern terminology, we may describe as the Ethical, the Economic, the Artistic, and the Spiritual; the Economic being the most outward, the Artistic the most inward. But both the first two are symbolically defined as his outer world, both the last two as his inner world. The first is the outer man in relation to his inner world, the second the outer man in relation to his outer world, the third the inner man in relation to his inner world, and the fourth the inner man in relation to his outer world, in some ways the completest state of all. The first two show him with friends, the last two with his family. The first represents his offering of all that is in him on behalf of the friends who had so nearly destroyed his soul, the second his acceptance in perfect love of the charitable gifts of relatives and friends (how much harder than the division of his last meal with a stranger), the third the creation of prophetic works of art in which Heaven and Hell are married,[3] the fourth the life in which Experience or Suffering is no longer a vision but a corporealised fact turned to music, while Innocence or Happiness is no longer a bodily accident but an Eternal Vision which may be seen even on earth.

Job's error, according to Blake, was his boasted perfection itself. For the individual to be fortified with every outward and even inward good is not, as he supposes, to cut himself off from evil, but to cut himself off from an infinite good, which he can find only in a deep sense of imperfection and in the divine society

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 198). [2] *Ib.*, 196.
[3] The small text below the design refers to Heaven and Hell.

of Man. This alone is Paradise, whether in earth or heaven. It is the difference between a tiny circle complete in itself and a small arc that only finds its completion in the circle of the universe.[1]

III

Wordsworth, describing some of Blake's literary work, says it was the production of "great but undoubtedly insane genius."[2] This opinion, general amongst his contemporaries and still adopted by many of the best minds of our own day, was not accepted by Blake's own intimates, and is seldom or never endorsed as it stands by students of his art. For, though there are still great tracts of his work which we cannot understand,[3] and there is something strange and distorted about almost everything he did, yet the fact (surely an eloquent one), remains, that almost every decade for a century since his death has added something to the splendour of his reputation and to the understanding of his meaning. In fact the question of Blake's sanity has almost ceased to have interest except for the therapeutist. If there was a weak place in his intellectual empire he brought forth such splendid resources of thought and genius to repair the mischief and to secure his mind and art from disaster that we are for ever richer for the struggle. Whatever mental obsessions may have oppressed him, they were

[1] *Cp.* "For the Sanctuary of Eden is . . .
In the Circumference:" ("Jm.," p. 69, ll. 41, 42).
Also "The Circumference is Within: Without, is formed the Selfish Centre."
"Jm.," p. 71, l. 7.

[2] Gilchrist, i. p. 372. *Cp.* "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 281).

[3] Mr Damon has certainly reduced these areas. He says: "There are of course many places the meaning of which was undoubtedly clearer in Blake's mind than my own. . . . But I feel convinced that my explanation of the fundamentals of Blake's works will prove to be essentially sound" (Damon, Preface, p. vii.).

but as the grains of impurity destined to become nuclei of incomparable pearls, and it is difficult to describe them as disease or taint.[1]

If it could be proved that he really believed the Book of Job to represent Jehovah in the opening as Job's great Satan or Selfhood slowly and painfully realised as such through the first part of the book and only redeemed in Christ in the second, then we should certainly have to admit that there was something about him which is common among the insane and, to say the least, uncommon among the sane. Personally I think he knew very well what he was doing; that he was making a new version of the story to conform with his own ideas of truth. But it must be granted that he had so strange a power of concentrating upon his own conceptions as to make them sometimes appear obsessions. His mind was a kind of lens that diverted all the rays into a single shaft and compensated for extraordinary brilliance where it shone by perfect darkness where it did not.[2] This results in an extreme form of a defect common to many artists who seek to escape the world, which perhaps the greatest of all never do. Shakespeare, however high he soars, forgets neither his audience nor his stage. But Blake's detachment gives nearly all his work the appearance of strangeness and often even of monstrosity. He cares only to do what he thinks right.[3] The public must take their chance.

[1] "The So-called Madness of Wm. Blake," *Quest*, Nov. 1911, by J. H. Wicksteed. This article is largely a reply to Mr Chesterton and others who pointed to certain real or supposed characteristics of Blake's mind as demonstably morbid. It is shown in this article how much Blake worked upon his visionary material, reducing it to ever more ordered and artistic form. Whatever the *origin* of his visions may have been, the *end* was the opposite of irresponsible or wild; it was often even over-elaborated and rationalised.

[2] *Cp.* J. T. Smith, Biographical Sketch (Symons, p. 363).

[3] Whether justifiably or not we certainly tend in popular opinion to describe

Yet, even so, the result is so great that many of his admirers resent as vandalism the attempt to "straighten him out," and vastly prefer him uninterpreted.

While not grudging them their point of view the present work is obviously committed to a different one. Many people have long been ruled out from any appreciation of Blake by his horny husk of incomprehensibility, and the kernel is too good not to be enjoyed by as many as possible. Then granting that the Job illustrations, like much of his poetry, are amazingly great and beautiful without any knowledge of the symbolism; granting also that the Book of Job is at least as great in the Old Testament as it is in this version of a "Christian Visionary"; granting also that all Blake's solutions, which are what the symbolism mainly elucidates, are wanting in finality, I maintain that the work, when unravelled, leaves the mind in possession of new images and thoughts of enduring value and beauty. Even his extravagance becomes extraordinarily beautiful as it appears in the Job.

We cannot, it is true, accept his reiterated assertions that forgiveness is the solution of all evil. To forgive Edmund does not restore Cordelia to a world immeasurably poorer for her loss.[1] And though he may declare that "For every Pleasure Money Is Useless,"[2] he himself testifies that "Works of art can only be produced in perfection where the man is either in affluence or is

it as madness when a man thinks right what most people think wrong. In this sense Blake has grown less mad every decade since his death, for there are more and more who think his art and thought right and those of his general contemporaries wrong.

[1] Even Blake avows that prevention is better than cure in such passages as—

> ". . . It is better to prevent misery than to release from misery,
> It is better to prevent error than to forgive the criminal;"
>
> "Jm.," 55, 49-50.

[2] "Laocoon."

above the care of it."[1] Yet who can look unmoved at the palette and brushes, the book and long scroll of manuscript Blake drew beneath the figure of Job, as he pours himself forth in intercession for the Friends who have tortured and humiliated his soul? In thus endorsing Job's act of forgiveness as his own, Blake shows us a true gate into Paradise. And as for money, who can see Blake's picture of his Job, a sometime prince of wealth, accepting in love and grief the silver of his friends, without some stirring of gratitude to a world that has given us our daily bread for these so many years, and added the incomparable gold of human thought, and art, beyond all our powers to repay.

We do not need to believe that either of these acts tells the whole story. We know in Blake's case it does not. He did not always attain his fourfold Heaven, not did he always deserve to. But, if we have claimed that it is only possible to understand his art by tracking out his philosophy, it is not less true that we can only understand his philosophy when we realise it as art. Blake, however he may express it, is not interpreting the universe or constructing a polity for the race. He is setting forth in lofty poetry the lights by which he himself has striven to steer his course. He himself had lived a long life of crippling poverty to become at last entirely dependent on a brother artist for the means of continuing his prophetic labours. Yet his sun sets without bitterness or one grudging thought for the outpourings of genius upon a world that had in return barely enabled him to live. His fourfold paradise in the Job speaks of his own old age transfiguring its loneliness and its memories of grief into chapelled halls and epics of design. And if we know, as we do, that his philosophic dreams were not even for himself an infallible panacea to protect him from

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195).

depression and desertion, we do not value them less because they could only relieve and not remove the common burden of mankind.[1]

And yet I think the main theme of Blake's Job remains as something more. If it offers no complete solution, it points to something of lasting greatness. For in the last analysis it is an attempted answer to a universal and perennial problem, and it is the answer of a master. In Politics, in Religion and in Art [2] humanity always encounters at some stage the problem of reconciliation of individual liberty with loyalty to the historic society of man that makes us what we are in our day and generation. How to be and become what heaven sealed him for without wrecking his foundations on earth is a problem that has thwarted many an ardent soul seeking advance of goodness, truth or beauty. Blake contrives to be quite uncompromising both in his individualism and his communism. All good (and evil too, but evil is to him only a negation,[3] or better still, a passage towards good) [4] is inward and individual good; it is good to me or to you or to some particular person or creature.[5] Salvation, happiness, beauty

[1] Gilchrist, i. p. 343. "It is just so with us is it not for weeks together when the visions forsake us."

[2] Essentially the same for Blake: "What is a Church? and What is a Theatre? are they two and not One? Can they Exist Separate? Are not Religion & Politics the Same Thing? Brotherhood is Religion." "Jm.," p. 57, ll. 9-11.

[3] "He allowed indeed that there is error, mistake, etc., and if these be evil—then there is evil, but these are only negations."
"H. C. R. Diary," 17th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 262).

[4] *V. supra*, pp. 54 *f.*

[5] The most explicit statement of this is in a passage from the "Last Judgment" MS., which Ellis and Yeats say Blake drew his pen through—though, as they remark, it does not follow that he withdrew his assent thereto. "There is not an error but has a man for its agent; that is, it is a man. There is not a truth but it has also a man. Good and evil are qualities in every man, whether a good or evil man" (E. Y., i.

and, in a certain ultimate sense, God are brought to being in, and only in, the individual soul.[1] On the other hand, the individual, however noble, heroic or successful in himself, is the mere incarnation of Satan until he has lost and recovered his own good in the goodness of the Divine-Humanity.[2] And the essence of that Divine-Humanity is love.[3] No man has found *himself* until he has found so great a love of others that no act or thought of theirs can alienate them from him or make him wish for them other than the highest good. This is Jerusalem, Bride of Christ, the love of men[4] as found in Man.

p. 232). What Blake disliked in this passage is the suggestion that any individual could be permanently identified with Evil. Apart from this passage the idea is implicit in the " Proverbs of Hell " (" M. H. H.," p. 9). " Prayers plow not ! Praises reap not ! Joys laugh not ! Sorrows weep not ! " (*cp. ib.* : " As the plow follows words, so God rewards prayers "). Without the personal will and realisation of things, nothing happens—there is neither hope nor love, good nor grief. *Cp.* also " He, who would do good to another, must do it in Minute Particulars./General Good is the plea of the scoundrel, hypocrite & flatterer " (" J[m]," p. 55, ll. 60-61).

Cp. " But General Forms have their vitality in Particulars : & every/Particular is a Man : " (" J[m]," p. 91, ll. 29-30).

Cp. also : " All life consists of these two : throwing off error and knaves from our company continually, and receiving truth or wise men into our company continually. He who is out of the Church and opposes it is no less an agent of religion than he who is in it : to be an error and to be cast out, is a part of God's design. No man can embrace true art till he has explored and cast out false art (such is the nature of mortal things) ; or he will be himself cast out by those who have already embraced true art. Thus, my picture is a history of art and science, the foundation of society, which is humanity itself. What are all the gifts of the Spirit but mental gifts ? Whenever any individual rejects error, and embraces truth, a Last Judgment passes upon that individual " (Gilchrist, ii. pp. 195-196).

[1] *Cp.* " God only Acts and Is, in existing beings or Men." " M. H. H.," p. 16.

[2] *Vide* Illus. x., esp. pp. 140 *f.*

[3] *Vide* Illus. xvii., esp. pp. 184 *ff.*

[4] Including of course the lower creation.

Cp. " Seest thou the little winged fly, smaller than a grain of sand ?
It has a heart like thee : a brain open to heaven & hell,

Whatever, therefore, Blake's purpose may have been in locking up his meaning in a jewelled casket that should be valued for its own sake even if for ever unopened, the pains we may take to unpick the lock are surely not irreverent nor in vain. What is true of all greatest art, that it delights us by suggestions and associations beyond the scan of the "perishing and mortal eye," [1] is peculiarly true of his. Beautiful as the lines themselves may sometimes be, it is from the first such things as radiant light and rushing motion or ponderous weight, as it is fear and rapture and desolation that give the greatness of thought and feeling to his compositions.

And in the same way it is Blake's profound conceptions of human life and poetic vision, partial and wanting in finality as they are, that constitute the soul of his Job designs. As mere engravings we may admire them as we admire a statue; but to understand what they tell us of his deeper thought is to see that statue not indeed wrought into a perfect work of art, but literally turned to life and become vocal with great song.

> Withinside wondrous & expansive: its gates are not clos'd,
> I hope thine are not: hence it clothes itself in rich array:
> Hence thou art cloth'd with human beauty, O thou mortal man.
> Seek not thy heavenly father then beyond the skies:"
>
> ("M[n].," p. 18, ll. 27-32.)

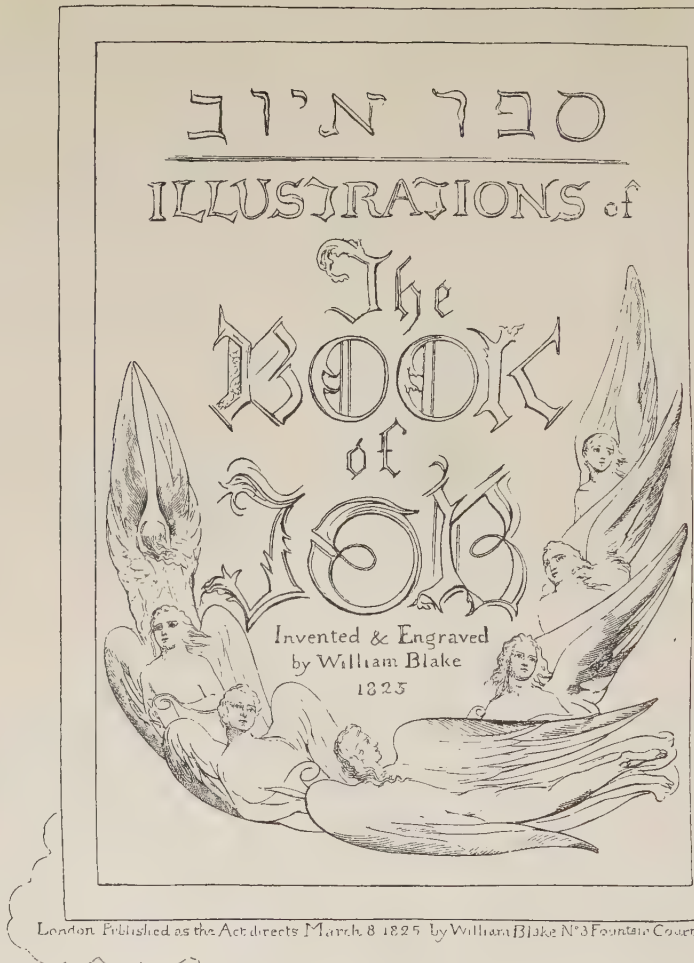
[1] Descriptive Catalogue No. iv. Gilchrist, ii. p. 153.

NOTE ON THE MARGINAL TEXTS

The marginal texts were added after Blake had already made two complete coloured versions of the series. The general idea in their arrangement is that those above the design refer to God or spiritual things, those below to man or earthly things. The exceptions are interesting and generally have some obvious reason. They are all quotations from the Bible, though frequently modified in some way. The less important of these modifications appear to be due to his having trusted his memory; but a few are intentional. They are of great value in helping to interpret the designs, but it must not be forgotten that ultimately *the texts are to be interpreted by the designs and not vice versa;* for Blake regarded the literal meaning of Scripture as misleading, and the purpose of the illustrations is to give Scripture its spiritual interpretation (*vide supra* p. 44). The large text below the design is given in **black type,** and describes its simpler meaning.

References for the texts are as follows:

I. Illus. (1) Mt. 6[9] & Lk. 11[2]
(2) **Job 1[5]**
(3) Job 1[1,2]
(4) 2 Cor. 3[6]
(5) 1 Cor. 2[14]
II. ,, (1) Dan. 7[9]
(2) **Job 1[8] or 2[3]**
(3) *cp.* Is. 63[9]
(4) *cp.* Job 19[26]
(5) Is. 64[8]
(6 & 7) *cp.* Ps. 17[15]
(8) Job 29[5]
(9) ,, 2[1] (*cp.* 1[6])
III. ,, (1) ,, 1[16]
(2) ,, 1[12]
(3) **Job 1[18,19]**
IV. ,, (1) *cp.* Job 1[14,15]
(2) Job 1[7], 2[2]
(3) **Job 1[15,16,17,19]**
(4) *cp.* Job 1[16]
V. ,, (1) Job 30[25]
(2) ,, 2[6]
(3) **Job 2[7a]**
(4) Gen. 6[6]
(5) Ps. 104[4]
VI. ,, (1) Job 1[21]
(2) **Job 2[7b]**
VII. ,, (1) ,, 2[10]
(2) **Job 2[12]**
(3) Jas. 5[11]
VIII. ,, (1) Job 3[7]
(2) **Job 3[3]**
VIII. Illus. (3) Job 2[13]
IX. ,, (1) ,, 4[17-18] & 15[15]
(2) **Job 4[15]**
X. ,, (1) ,, 23[10]
(2) ,, 19[21]
(3) ,, 13[15]
(4) **Job 12[4]**
(5) ,, 14[1-8]
XI. ,, (1) ,, 30[17]
(2) ,, 30[30]
(3) ,, 20[5]
(4) *cp.* 2 Cor. 11[14,15]
(5) *cp.* **Job 7[13,14]**
(6) *cp.* ,, 19[22,27]
(7) 2 Thes. 2[4]
XII. ,, all from Job 32-35
XIII. ,, (1) Job 38[2]
(2) **Job 38[1]**
(3) Ps. 104[3]
(4) Job 38[28]
XIV. ,, (1) ,, 38[31]
(2) Gen. 1
(3) **Job 38[7]**
XV. ,, (1) ,, 36[29]
(2) ,, 37[11-12]
(3) *cp.* Job 40[19]
(4) *cp.* ,, 41[34]
(5) **Job 40[15]**
XVI. ,, (1) ,, 26[6]
(2) ,, 11[7]
(3) Rev. 12[10]
(4) Job 11[8]
XVI. Illus. (5) John 12[31]
(6) **Job 36[17]**
(7) Luke 10[17,18]
(8) 1 Cor. 1[27]
XVII. ,, (1) 1 Sam. 2[6]
(2) 1 John 3[2]
(3) Ps. 8[3,4]
(4) *cp.* **Job 42[5]**
(5) John 14[9], 10[30]
(6) ,, 14[7]
(7) ,, 14[11]
(8) ,, 14[21,17]
(9) ,, 14[20],14[28]
(10) ,,14,[21,23,16,17]
XVIII. ,, (1) Job 42[9]
(2) **Job 42[8]**
(3) ,, 42[10]
(4) Mt. 5[44,45]
(5) ,, 5[48]
XIX. ,, (1) 1 Sam. 2[7]
(2) Job 38[41]
(3) **Job 42[11]**
(4) Ps. 136[23]
XX. ,, (1) ,, 139[17]
(2) *cp.* **Job 42[15]**
(3) Ps. 139[8]
XXI. ,, (1) Rev. 15[2]
(2) **Job 42[12]**
(3) ,, 42[16,17]
(4) Heb. 10[6] and *cp.* Ps. 40[6]


סֵפֶר אִיּוֹב
ILLUSTRATIONS of
The BOOK of JOB
Invented & Engraved
by William Blake
1823
London Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by William Blake N°3 Fountain Court Strand

TITLE-PAGE

"Thus are the Heavens formd . . . in Eternal Circle, to awake the Prisoners of Death: to bring Albion again . . . into light eternal, in his eternal day" ("Jm.," p. 75, ll. 23-26).

The Hebrew words at the head of this page ספר איוב (Book of Job) are possibly significant of the fact that these illustrations do not represent the literal story so much as the spiritual meaning of the Book of Job. For, according to Blake, the Hebrew Deity was the Poetic Genius,[1] and to read the Scriptures in their literal, rather than their poetic, sense, was to misread them.[2]

However this may be, there can be no doubt that the direction of the angels' flight round the lower part of the design is symbolical of Experience,[3] the process of the casting out of evil. For it will be noticed that the angels on the reader's right are represented as descending, those on his left as ascending, so that the whole train moves clock-wise round the page. This is what Blake called "the current of Creation,"[4] being the direction of the sun's apparent motion as seen in the heavens.[5]

[1] "We of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and . . . that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours & to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius" ("M. H. H.," pp. 12, 13). *Cp.* also some suggestions in note 1, pp. 195 *f.*, Illus. 18, respecting the significance of reversed writing for Blake.

[2] "He understands by the Bible the Spiritual Sense. For as to the natural sense, that Voltaire was commissioned by God to expose." "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 267).

[3] *Vide* Introduction, p. 55, and Illus. xx. and xxi.

[4] "Jm.," p. 77, ll. 4-5 of the blank verse. *Vide* also Appendix C.

[5] Mr Damon makes the very interesting observation that there are seven of these angels, representing the "Seven Eyes of God." It will be noted that there are three

We are in this book, however, concerned not so much with the visible part of the current, which carries the sun in the daytime up to his height in the south and down again into the west, but with the part below the horizon, by which the unseen sun is taken back through the under world, to re-appear again in the east.[1]

This mysterious but triumphant passage through the night, speaks to Blake of the redeeming trend of human life, persisting even in our greatest darkness, and as such it was peculiarly descriptive of Job's fate.[2]

times seven illustrations. Seven pairs culminating in Illus. 14, followed by seven ending with Illus. 21. *Vide* Damon, p. 225.

[1] *Cp.* the first lines of Jerusalem (p. 4, ll. 1-2).

> " Of the Sleep of Ulro ! and of the passage through
> Eternal Death ! and of the awakening to Eternal Life."

[2] Men are always moving. It is only the states they pass through that can be fixed. It is the work of Los in Jerusalem to fix states, in order to liberate individuals (*vide* note 2, Introduction, p. 55).

" So Men pass on : but States remain permanent for ever " (" J^m.," p. 73, l. 43). *Cp.* " J^m.," p. 49, l. 70 *ff.* ; also " V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 188).

Our Father which art in Heaven

hallowed be thy Name

1

Thus did Job continually

There was a Man in the Land of Uz whose Name was Job & that Man was perfect & upright

The Letter Killeth
The Spirit giveth Life

It is Spiritually Discerned

& one that feared God & eschewed Evil & there was born unto him Seven Sons & Three Daughters

WBlake inv & sculp

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ILLUSTRATION I

". . . the sweet regions of youth and virgin innocence;
Where we live, forgetting error, not pondering on evil;
Among my lambs & brooks of water, among my warbling birds:
Where we delight in innocence before the face of the Lamb;
Going in and out before him in his love and sweet affection" ("Jm.," p. 20, ll. 6-10).
(*Cp.* also margin of next design, which also represents "Innocence.")

The first Illustration shows the calm before the storm. It represents for Blake the outward and visible life of Job, whom we see gathered with his wife and children, for their evening devotions, the simple piety of which is suggested by the words in the margin above: "Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name." Above them spreads a great tree, symbol of Job's strongly rooted and prosperous mortal life;[1] while in the background on his right, the pinnacles of a Gothic church rise into the arc of the setting sun. On his left the crescent moon[2] and evening star

[1] In this book the tree is used where the design definitely refers to Job's experiences in the earthly plane.

Blake opens one of his early prophecies with "Eno, aged Mother," "sitting beneath the eternal Oak" ("Bk. of Los," ch. i. vv. 1-2). "Vegetative" and "corporeal" are practically synonymous with Blake ("Jm.," p. 77, etc. etc.). But I suspect that in these designs the "tree" has an ulterior meaning, and refers to his well-being, as expressed in material things. *Cp.* "Good & Evil are Riches & Poverty a Tree of Misery" ("Laocoon"). *Vide* Illus. 2, 4, 19 and 21; *cp.* "Jm.," p. 92, l. 25.

[2] If we had to attach importance to the phase of the moon this could only be a rising sun. But Blake's representations of Nature are always and deliberately ideal, *cp.* for instance the splendid display of the stars in Illus. 12, and its complete independence of astronomical considerations. *Cp.* "Natural objects always did and now do

shed beneficent rays [1] upon his barns and storehouses. The two sides of the scene correspond to the spiritual (or "artistic") [2] and material sides of his life; both richly filled. In the foreground a few sheep are lying down with a dog, scarcely distinguishable from themselves, while numerous flocks are settling to rest or still gently grazing behind. A deep peace lies upon everything. The quaint musical instruments hang now silent upon the tree, and the dark shadows of the distant hills—presently to become so threatening—are as yet softened by the moonlight. The whole design represents the ideal state of Innocence, which the pastoral life symbolises.[3]

But Innocence is not a stable condition of the soul. And Job's "perfection" contains an element of death. The written books, and the silent instruments above, represent the letter and the spirit, referred to on the altar below, and here we see Job dwelling on the letter that "killeth," while the Spirit that "giveth life" is not yet waked.[4]

weaken deaden and obliterate Imagination in me." "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 300). Blake liked to begin with sunset and end with sunrise. For those, however, who insist on realism, the fact that the scene represents sunset and not sunrise is sufficiently indicated by many of the animals being asleep and the men awake (*vide* Appendix C.).

[1] *Cp.* last line of "Evening Star": "Poetical Sketches," London, 1783, p. 5.

> "The fleeces of our flocks are cover'd with
> Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence."

[2] "A Gothic church is representative of true art." "V. L. J." (*cp.* Gilchrist, ii. p. 192). "Christianity is Art," etc. ("Laocoon").

[3] "Jm.," p. 20, ll. 6-10, quoted *supra*, p. 89.

[4] Mr Damon admirably expresses the meaning of the instruments in contrast to the books. "These prayers are being read from the books written by others; the musical instruments of spontaneous praise hang silent upon the tree." Damon, p. 226. *Vide* last Illustration, where the instruments are taken down and used.

The lines of the composition are very simple and strong, the backs of the recumbent sheep in the foreground forming a kind of soft but massive pedestal from which the figures rise in symmetrical undulations that meet and spread again in the great tree.

I shall see God

We shall awake up

I beheld the Ancient of Days

Hast thou considered my Servant Job

The Angel of the Divine Presence

יהוה מלך

Thou art our Father

in thy Likeness

When the Almighty was yet with me. When my Children were about me

There was a day when the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord & Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord

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ILLUSTRATION II

"Men are born with an Angel and a Devil." "Every man has a Devil in himself and the conflict between his *Self* and God is perpetually carrying on." ("H. C. R. Rem., "1826.)

HERE the heavens are opened and we see into the spiritual life of Job. For Blake represents the inner by the higher, "What is Above," he says, "is Within." [1]

This inward life of Job is the real theme of the book, which aims at interpreting Job's outward story by revealing what according to Blake's vision was going on within. Accordingly Jehovah and Satan must be conceived as representing aspects of Job's own soul contending for victory. They are shown with their right feet advanced to symbolise their spiritual correspondence with the earthly man, who shows his left.[2] Here Jehovah is supreme (מלך יהוה, Jehovah is King). He represents what Blake calls the "Angel" or "Genius" (or more frequently the Poetic Genius) [3] of the man; and for this reason he appears in the same image as Job himself; the two being intentionally drawn alike, because "The Poetic Genius is the true Man . . . the Body, or Outward Form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius," and "as all men are

[1] "Jm.," p. 71, l. 6.

[2] *Vide* Appendix A.

[3] He uses the term Poetic Genius in his marginal notes to Swedenborg's "Angelic Wisdom," and he says in the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell," "we of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and all others merely derivative . . . prophesying that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours and to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius." (*Vide supra* p. 87.)

alike in Outward Form, So (and with the same infinite variety) all are alike in the Poetic Genius." [1] But though each man's genius is his soul or self, it is at the same time something more. In it we are enabled to approach the souls of all other men and things, and " as all similars have one course," [1] each man may ultimately reach the origin (Father), the single essence of all things, through his own " poetic genius."

In other words, Blake, while conceiving that God is to each man his inmost being, yet believes that for a man to know his own being deeply enough is to be in union with the self of every other man and beast, and even flower and star throughout creation.[2]

God therefore is—as the marginal texts describe—both " Angel of the Divine Presence " and " Ancient of Days." For the ever-present consciousness of man is the same Divine force which, in other forms, has been working from the dawn of things in the worm and even the clod.[3]

[1] " A. R. O." and *cp.* " Men are born with a devil and an angel, but this he himself interpreted body and soul." " H. C. R. Diary," 7th Dec. 1826 (Symons, pp. 270-1).

[2] . . . " Each grain of sand, Each herb & each tree,
Every Stone on the Land, Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,
Each rock & each hill, Cloud, Meteor, and Star,
Each fountain & rill, Are Men seen Afar."

Poem in Letter to Thos. Butts, 2nd Oct. 1800 (Russell, pp. 82, 83).

[3] " God is in the lowest effects as well as in the highest causes for he is become a worm that he may nourish the weak." " Lav.," 630 (Ellis, 620, p. 149).

" For every thing that lives is holy, for the source of life
Descends to be a weeping babe ;
For the Earthworm renews the moisture of the sandy plain."
" F. Z." (*cp.* " Vala," ii. ll. 366-368).

Also *cp.* " Thel.," v. 3 with vv. 14 and 15 of poem on p. 27 of " J[m]."

The angels are reading the life-books [1] of Job and his family and carrying up the records to judgment. The Accuser,[2] too, rushes forward to bring his charge, and in his flame of selfishness we see the shadowy images of Job and his wife, suggesting that Job's spiritual life itself is a form of self-seeking.

This invasion by the Fiend comes like a first gust heralding the storm about to burst, and to shatter both the gentle domestic peace of Job's life shown below, and the passionless calm of his indwelling Deity, shown above.

The convention by which in the first Illustration Job's spiritual good was shown on his right hand and his material good on his left, is maintained throughout the book wherever Job is drawn in the centre. And here his children in the flesh appear on his left, under " the Stems of Vegetation " [3] (always symbolical of earth), while the angels (probably intentionally including his wife, as we shall see [4]), are on his right.

Following the Bible story, Blake represents Satan's first attack as directed not against the man himself, but against his possessions and especially his family. In the next design we shall see how Blake seized the opportunity this offered for bringing home his indictment of selfishness against the family as an institution. In certain aspects it appeared to Blake to be a mere seeking immunity

[1] *Cp.* " But still his books he bore in his strong hands, & his iron pen,
. . . . . nor can the man who goes
The journey obstinate refuse to write "
" F. Z." (*cp.* " Vala," vi. ll. 164-172).

[2] Even in Blake's system Satan is the Accuser and Slanderer because " he torments the just, and makes them do what he condemns as sin, and what he knows is opposite to their own identity." " V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 199).

[3] " J[m]," p. 60, l. 11, etc.

[4] *Vide* Illus. xxi. and Appendix F.

from the surrounding distress, which, so far from attempting to relieve, he believed it actually emphasised.[1]

In "Jerusalem" (p. 41, ll. 27-29) he describes the Four Zoas as

> "Drinking the shuddering fears & loves of Albion's Families
> Destroying by selfish affections the things that they most admire
> Drinking & eating & pitying & weeping as at a tragic scene."

Considering the design in its connection with the rest of the series it is one of the cardinal ones and forms the link between Illus. 1 and 3. Throughout the first half of the work Blake is intent on showing that Satan destroys men equally in their virtues and their vices, a theme which reaches its climax in the central illustration (Illus. 11). But Job himself being all virtue (Illus. 1), gives no opportunity for the latter demonstration, which is, therefore, given us in the case of his family (Illus. 3). His own destruction in his virtues is begun in Illus. 5.

We already see the contrast between the perfect peace of the angels coming right down to earth on Job's right with the satanically disturbed angels above on his left. Two of these, as the position of their feet shows, correspond to the two sons shown upon Job's left. Apart from Satan and his influence there are only three ominous signs. The repeated emphasis upon books and scrolls symbolising the letter that killeth; the dog beneath the reclining son (almost certainly a phallic symbol) [2] and the nearly unique foot position of this son and wife to which we shall have to refer more fully later.

The design itself suffers, though it cannot be destroyed, by Blake's theories. That the Deity had to be another Job need not

[1] *Vide* Illus. iii.

[2] *Cp.* illustration p. 24 of "Urizen," the dog howling "at the wintry door" and the pious little virgin. The text connected with it is "Urizen," ch. viii. vv. 4 and 5. *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 21, l. 8.

have mattered had not Blake been committed to make things seen in vision more definite and determinate than things seen with the earthly eye.[1] Even so the over elaboration and massiveness of the heavenly group is relieved by the rush and rhythm of the angels and the disturbance caused by Satan's tempestuous inrush. The exquisite beauty of the decorative base rising into a perfect storm of rhythmically waving lines, crowned by a majestic calm over all, gives the whole design, both in its detail and its mass, a splendour at once architectural and musical, such as even Blake has seldom surpassed.

The margin is full of symbolism, the most important part of which is the representation of Job and his wife, as still dwelling in the pastoral age or age of innocence.[2]

[1] *E.g.*, "Vision is Determinate and Perfect." "Rey." 2 (Ellis, p. 380), also "A Spirit and a Vision are not as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing; they are organised and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better lineaments and in stronger and better light than his perishing and mortal eye can see does not imagine at all. The painter of this work asserts that all his imaginations appear to him infinitely more perfect and more minutely organised than anything seen by his mortal eye. Spirits are organised men:" Descriptive Catalogue, Number iv. (Gilchrist, ii. p. 153).

[2] "Jm.," p. 20, ll. 6-10; *cp.* verse, head of Illus. i. The significance of the Pillars of Fire and Cloud is more remote. It is probably connected with the mythological characters of Luvah and his feminine counterpart Vala, *cp.* "Tho Valas cloud hide thee & Luvahs fires follow thee" ("Jm.," p. 62, l. 28). Luvah in separation is perhaps love without "faith" or "intellect," and Vala "Mother Nature" without inspiration (Jerusalem), ("Jm.," p. 34, l. 9; "F. Z.," *cp.* "Vala," ii. ll. 104-105).

The Fire of God is Fallen from Heaven

And the Lord said unto Satan Behold All that he hath is in thy Power

Thy Sons & thy Daughters were eating & drinking Wine in their eldest Brothers house & behold there came a great wind from the Wilderness & smote upon the four faces of the house & it fell upon the young Men & they are Dead

W Blake inven. & sculp.

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ILLUSTRATION III

"The Devil is in us, as far as we are Nature." ("H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825.)

"Is this thy soft Family-Love
Thy cruel Patriarchal pride
Planting thy Family alone
Destroying all the World beside.

A man's worst enemies are those
Of his own house & family:
And he who makes his law a curse
By his own law shall surely die" ("Jm.," p. 27).

The storm bursts with sudden fury in this wonderful Illustration which is as full of "recondite meaning where more is meant than meets the eye," [1] as it is crowded with incident. In the story it represents Satan working his will upon Job's children. "All that he hath is in thy power," says Jehovah. And the true source of that power lies, as we shall see, in the character of the partiarchal family itself. This is emphasised by a definite departure from the Bible narrative. There the three sisters are expressly mentioned as joining their brothers, whereas no word is said of wives or children. Here the seven sons are represented (all on one side of the design) with seven women obviously intended for their wives (on the other side; the side, namely, where Job's wife is generally placed); and the central figure holds a child.

The meaning, like the scene itself, centres round the main figure,[2] who though furthest of all the men from the foreground is drawn on a larger scale than any. Moreover, it is significant in a Blake design that he is the only man who shows his feet.

[1] Descriptive Catalogue, Number ii. (Gilchrist, ii. p. 141).

[2] In an earlier version this figure is not included in the seven, and may therefore be regarded, I suppose, as the type.

This is connected with the extraordinary attitude of Satan shown above, who, as in the previous design, is truly within. The position of his legs not only enhances his demoniacal appearance and significance, but shows him to be definitely the spiritual prototype of the man he is crushing; as Jehovah, being dominant in the previous design, was the prototype of Job. For though Satan is shown with his left leg before his right, his right foot, in defiance of anatomical possibility, is drawn in advance of his left, to make him in spiritual correspondence with the earthly man, whom we see attempting to rise leftwards and with left foot foremost.[1] In further evidence of this definite correspondence is the fact that Satan, for the only time in the book, is shown with a white light or halo, which always symbolises the soul of some man represented in the design.

The symbolical attitude of the earthly man concisely expresses Blake's fundamental charge against what he calls "thy soft Family-Love, thy cruel Patriarchal pride."[2] The outwardly happy family, he believes, is spiritually vitiated by the attempt to escape evil and attain happiness through material success; and this, though it may seem to rescue the few here and there, cannot touch the ultimate source of distress. It is what Blake would call the attempt to overcome Babylon with the "natural" and not the "spiritual sword."[3]

[1] Although out of piety to Blake we must "attend to the hands and feet" (*vide supra*, Introduction, p. 48), readers who find such technicalities confusing may prefer to neglect them on a first reading. The argument will generally be sufficiently clear without them, and even sometimes, perhaps, more convincing. In the end, it is to be hoped, they will find, that the detailed symbolism has become genuinely expressive to them, as it certainly was to Blake.

[2] "Jm.," p. 27, v. 20 of the poem.

[3] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 52. "Babylon" is for Blake the "natural" as opposed to Jerusalem the "spiritual" state of humanity. *Cp.* "Art thou not Babylon? Art thou

To help in the elucidation of this design we will recall Blake's unique method of castigating evil in the "Songs of Innocence and of Experience" which he repeatedly follows in the present work. First he shows us a picture of the thing as we see it with the outward eye (and as it truly is in one aspect). This he does with all his matchless power of expressing fair and gentle thoughts. But against this delicate background he then flashes his indignant picture of the same thing as it ought to appear to us. The typical example of this is his companion songs of Innocence and of Experience, entitled "Holy Thursday." The first, it will be remembered, is a beautiful lyric, describing the orphan procession entering St. Paul's, and filling its dome with song. It breathes of gentle and peaceful piety lifted to a genuine splendour :

"The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands.
Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among.
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor ;
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door."

Nature Mother of all ?" ("Jm.," p. 34, ll. 8-9). *Cp.* also "Jm.," p. 18, ll. 29, 30. This state is described in the following passage :—

"To build Babylon because they have forsaken Jerusalem
The Walls of Babylon are Souls of Men : her Gates the Groans
Of Nations : her Towers are the Miseries of once happy Families.
Her Streets are paved with Destruction, her Houses built with Death.
Her Palaces with Hell & the Grave ; her Synagogues with Torments
Of ever-hardening Despair squard & polishd with cruel skill.
Yet thou wast lovely as the summer cloud upon my hills
When Jerusalem was thy hearts desire in times of youth & love.
Thy Sons came to Jerusalem with gifts, she sent them away
With blessings on their hands & on their feet, blessings of gold
And pearl & diamond : thy Daughters sang in her Courts :
They came up to Jerusalem ; they walked before Albion."
("Jm.," p. 24, ll. 30 *ff.*)

Yet in his " Song of Experience " he asks in swift, scathing words :—

" Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reducd to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand ?

Is that trembling cry a song ?
Can it be a song of joy ?
And so many children poor ?
It is a land of poverty."

And so here, after showing us in the previous Illustration a smiling picture of family bliss beneath the trees on Job's left, he now proceeds in this design to show us what this family bliss means if based on material good. Yet there is this great difference between Blake in his fiery youth and in his age. In the present design there is a depth of tragedy and horror expressed without a trace of indignation. The central figure, for all that he is wholly possessed of Satan, is shown as genuinely heroic, and the little child (badly as he is drawn) is shown touchingly clutching hold of his father's hair. With this in our minds as a corrective, we must once more return to the " Songs of Experience " to learn that Blake's charge against the family was essentially the same as his charge against both Church and State.

Owing to false ideas, all alike, he thought, were based upon (or at least permitted) a state of affairs in our streets and villages [1] radically incompatible with the good they professed to foster and protect. Thus he tells how :

" In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear.
In every voice : in every ban
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

[1] *Cp.* " J[m]." p. 30, ll. 21-32, quoted at length, *supra*, Introduction, note pp. 68-9.

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
  Every blackning Church appalls
(originally—*Blackens o'er the churches walls*).[1]
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
  Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
  How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new born Infants tear
  And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse." [2]

So here, but in very different mood, Blake—using Job's children as types—shows how against even the momentary success of one man in his attempt to preserve the sanctity and immunity of the home, must be counted the headlong fall of the two brothers who have preceded him; dashed amidst the cups and plates which symbolise their grosser passions; and the beautiful ruined form of his sister, shown with her left hand upon a lyre, and her feet upon a tambourine (note the unnaturally raised left foot), symbolising the beauty and gifts that have been exploited for merely corporeal pleasure, reckless of the soul they were meant to express.

At the root of all this evil Blake believes is a false estimate of material things, which produces a financially-based Society, and puts in the hands of the wealthy a dire instrument of coercion, in the threat of destitution. For him it is "to freeze Love & Innocence into the gold & silver of the Merchant." [3] He believed that

[1] Sampson, p. 131. This version (abandoned evidently so as not to repeat the word "walls") shows Blake's meaning to have been that the "cry" is a stain upon the Church, making it (the Church) an object of horror.

[2] "London," "S. E."

[3] "Jm.," p. 64, l. 23.

there was food enough in the world for all,[1] and that what really bound men together was the poetic imagination and the love of the beautiful.[2] His delightful remark that "For every Pleasure Money Is Useless" is only the negative side of his charge.[3] Our belief in its efficacy, he holds, cuts us off from all the highest life. "Where any view of Money exists," he says, "Art cannot be carried on."[3] It even becomes the instrument of cruellest oppression, "the lifes blood of Poor Families,"[3] for by its means we set "a Price . . . upon what is Common to all in [Christ's] Kingdom."[4] "The whole Business of Man Is the Arts," he triumphantly declares, "& All Things Common."[5] Surely no Hebrew prophet could present a more unquestioning vision of the ideal, and Blake's childlike faith has something of the same haunting and purifying power.

But, unfortunately, the "Selfish Virtues of the Natural Heart"[6] as he believed, and the "soft family love" of the (apparently) successful man in the struggle, wed him to "the Laws of that Babylon which . . . shall shortly be destroyed, with the Spiritual and not the Natural Sword."[6] This age is the time prophesied by the eternals in Jerusalem, "when a mans worst enemies shall be those of his own house and family."[7] Yet "Poverty is the fool's rod, which at last is turned on his own back."[8] That is to say no

[1] "For Where-e'er the sun does shine
And where-e'er the rain does fall:
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appall."
("Holy Thursday," "S. E.")

[2] "Art and science [*i.e.* of course "visionary" science, not material, with Blake] the foundation of society." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 196).

[3] "The Laocoon."

[4] "Thornton" (*cp.* E. Y., vol. i. p. 126).

[5] "The Laocoon."

[6] "Jm.," p. 52.

[7] "Jm.," p. 46, ll. 25, 26.

[8] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195).

man can really escape from the seething distress in which he allows the rest of the world to welter. So long as the distress remains, it is a stain and horror if not an actual menace to himself. Job's son may for a moment rescue his own wife and child from the sinking abyss of flame, but so long as he fights with the natural sword, and not the spiritual, the distress itself remains an ever-greedy abyss behind, and others whose need is no less dire must cry for help in vain. This is emphasised in the design by the repetition of the wife's attitude in the woman just behind her.

Now this " corporeal " view of life is inflicted and inspired by man's indwelling Satan, and the design not only represents a world of distress all around Job's son, but the blighting of his own domestic joy and happiness by the very system with which he vainly attempts to secure them. We see with what glee Satan crushes the man beneath the pillars of his own house, and the scene closely illustrates and interprets the angry verses in " Jerusalem " :—

> " Is this thy soft Family-Love
> Thy cruel Patriarchal pride.
> Planting thy Family alone,
> Destroying all the World beside.
>
> A mans worst enemies are those
> Of his own house & family ;
> And he who makes his law a curse,
> By his own law shall surely die." [1]

Two other figures are of importance to the complete interpretation of the design. There is first the brother fallen head foremost (reduplicated by a figure at his side) whose nightmare appearance is enhanced by the fact that, though his whole body

[1] " Jm.," p. 27, vv. 20, 21 of poem.

is really drawn in the foreground, his knees are made to reach the stone step behind the four brothers sinking in the flames. His right hand is (no doubt purposely) cut off by the margin, and his left hand curiously flattened, and apparently *nailed* against the plate, so as to suggest the head-downward crucifixion referred to in Blake's "Vision of Last Judgment." "The modern Church," he says, "crucifies Christ with the head downwards."[1] The meaning of this passage is somewhat obscure, but it seems likely to be that the imaginative and artistic temperament (symbolised by Christ)[2] is driven by the false ideals of the "modern Church," to express itself in sensual pleasure, the woeful tree, upon which it is inverted and cruelly slain. In other words, our false ideals often wreak the direst wreck upon imaginative natures, which in "Eternity" are the most divine.[3]

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 197).

[2] *Cp.* "The mocker of art is the mocker of Jesus," Letter to Hayley, 11th Dec. 1805 (Russell, p. 189).

[3] *Cp.* "Babylon, the Rational Morality, deluding to death the little ones, in strong temptations of stolen beauty" ("J^m.," p. 74, ll. 32, 33).

It is true that here and elsewhere the "temptations" may be intellectual rather than carnal, but the mere fact that Blake continually uses images of carnal ruin to describe mental disaster proves that he had the natural instinctive horror of the former. His test is that of humanity; where vice appeared to him cruel or dehumanising, he thinks of it as something unspeakably grievous and even diabolical. It would be as false to regard him as non-moral (not to speak of immoral) because of the highly unconventional character of much of his moralising, as it would be to regard him as being without the religious sentiment because his Christianity frequently quarrels with the "orthodoxy" of his day.

The connection in Blake's mind between "Natural" morality and the crucifixion, is shown by the passage on p. 52 of "Jerusalem." "Natural Morality, or Self-Righteousness, the Selfish Virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the Religion of the Pharisees who murderd Jesus."

Cp. with this "Some people, and not a few artists, have asserted that the painter of this picture [A Vision of the Last Judgment] would not have done so well if he had been properly encouraged. Let those who think so, reflect on the state of nations under poverty and their incapability of art. Though art is above either, the argument

Except for the central figure and this inverted one there is only one brother who faces the spectator, and that brother, strangely enough, is a woman. The figure has long streaming hair and the breasts [1] are those of a woman. As originally conceived by Blake it was almost certainly a man,[2] but one of his characteristic conceptions is of individuals becoming what they behold,[3] and as he worked upon the Invention I do not doubt that he came to conceive this figure as that of a man who had become the thing that filled his mind. It seems to be identified by the coronal with one or both of the married couple in the previous Illustration, where their state is represented as externally so fair. But Satan himself may be present in legal marriage if it is in the "letter" and not the "spirit." In the "Songs of Experience" he speaks of the "Marriage hearse," [4] and the "Pebble" says:

> "Love seeketh only Self to please
> To bind another to Its delight." [5]

is better for affluence than poverty; and though he would not have been a greater artist, yet he would have produced greater works of art, in proportion to his means" "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195).

[1] Blake often draws his male breasts very full, but these have nothing of the characteristic squareness which he delights to show in the masculine form. Another interesting point in the figure is its nudity, at all events in the upper portion, though the lower trunk appears to be finely swathed, possibly in smoke. It is characteristic of the Job that, though there are several nude male forms, there are no nude females. Even the tiny figures in the margin of Illus. 12 are, I think, all represented as draped, as shown by the many double lines. This is possibly why we have no Adam and Eve in the days of Creation in the margin of Illus. 14, and perhaps confirms the fact that this figure is only in its accidents and not its essence female.

[2] The testimony of those who have seen the original water-colour drawings now in America is not quite unanimous, but leaves little doubt I think. It is even possible that in one of the drawings he attempted to represent "A Male within a Female hid as in an Ark & Curtains" ("Mⁿ.," p. 37, l. 40) which might account for some doubt.

[3] "Mⁿ.," p. 5*, l. 29. "He became what he beheld." *Cp.* "Jᵐ.," p. 34, ll. 50, 54, *ib.* p. 36, ll. 9, 14, 15, 19.

[4] "London."

[5] "The Clod and the Pebble." "S. E." *Cp.* Illus. xvii., esp. pp. 189 *f.*

May it not be that this strange figure represents the state described in "Jerusalem" ". . . when compulsory cruel Sacrifices had brought Humanity into a Feminine Tabernacle." [1]

It has been noticed that there is only one man in the design who shows his feet, but there are three women who do so. It is not improbable that they typify the women who are in carnal relations with the man; the legal wife, the unacknowledged wife behind her, and the harlot, all alike defenceless against the day of Satan's wrath. In the later relations of Job and his wife we shall learn the true completion of wedded love.

Flames, smoke and scorpions—whose envenomed tails impend (like "the fool's rod") above their own backs—with a glimpse of the scales of the serpent (money) [2] fill the margin. There is nothing obscure in the texts except perhaps the meaning of the words, "The fire of God is fallen from Heaven." In the Bible this text applies not to the destruction of the sons and daughters, but to that of the flocks and their shepherds. But Blake possibly used it here to describe the state when the divine energy of man (the fire of God) falls from his mind (Heaven) [3] into the lower centres of his life.

We cannot leave the design without a word upon its splendour. It has an upward and a downward motion that crash and split in meeting. From the solid, motionless floor the lines converge about the feet of Satan to spread out again in his wings. But the

[1] "Jm.," p. 27.

[2] "Money which is the Great Satan" ("Laocoon").

[3] *Cp.* "Bends over thy immortal Head, in which Eternity dwells" ("Jm.," p. 86, l. 10).

Cp. "From out the Portals of my Brain, where by your ministry
The Eternal Great Humanity Divine, planted his Paradise."
("Ma.," p. 3, ll. 7, 8.)

upper edge of the wings is as firm as the floor itself, and from this immovable supernal base destruction is flashed and thundered downwards through crashing masonry, until on Satan's extreme left death and corruption seem to corrode the floor itself. In the centre the upward motion is challenged but gathers strength, and at last is almost dominant, on the Fiend's right. So that one can trace even in the tossing confusion of Satan's maelstrom the redeeming clockwise trend of the "current of creation," against which the harlot and the hermaphrodite are significantly set.[1]

NOTE ON BLAKE'S IDEAS CONCERNING DESIRE

Blake's attitude toward desire is both modern and idealistic. Desire, he thinks, must be acted on, not repressed. "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence," "Expect poison from standing water," and "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires" ("M. H. H."). But fleshly desire is at best a veil between a man and spiritual desire—"Why a little curtain of flesh on the bed of our desire?" (Thel)—and at worst it is hell itself. "Hell is the being shut up in the possession of corporeal desires" (Lav.). Yet it may lead to heaven, for "Hell is opend to Heaven" ("J^{m}.," p. 77), being the image of spiritual desire. (*Cp.* "O holy Generation, Image of regeneration!" "J^{m}.," p. 7, l. 65), by which the Artist builds Jerusalem or makes heaven on earth.

> "Bring me my Bow of burning gold;
> Bring me my Arrows of desire:
> . . . .
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In Englands green & pleasant Land" ("M^{n}.," p. 2).

There are four paths to the rejection of "error" which do not envolve us in the greater error of repression. (*a*) The falsity of actions may be discovered by experience. "If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise," "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom," "You

[1] Mr Damon's interesting treatment of this design is dealt with in the Preface.

never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough" ("M. H. H."). (*b*) The falsity of ideas may be exposed.

> "That he who will not defend Truth may be compelld to defend
> A Lie: that he may be snared and caught and snared and taken."
> "J[m].," p. 9, ll. 29, 30.

Cp. "M[n].," p. 6, ll. 47 *f.*, and *cp.* "Giving a body to Falshood that it may be cast off for ever." "J[m].," p. 12, l. 13.) (*c*) "By the advice of a friend [Illus. xii., Elihu], or (*d*) by the immediate inspiration [Illus. xvii., Christ] of God." "V. L. J."

This last is not negative but positive. It is what we should to-day call "sublimation." "We are told to abstain from fleshly desires that we may lose no time from the Work of the Lord. Every moment lost, is a moment that cannot be redeemed. . . . What is the Joy of Heaven but Improvement in the things of the Spirit? What are the Pains of Hell, but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness & devastation of the things of the Spirit?" (*Vide infra*, note 1, p. 145, also note 1, p. 127.

Now it is the Artist's business to *set forth* Error for what it is, in fact to castigate it. This Blake calls "the Creation of States," and it is *per se* the "deliverance of Individuals Evermore" ("J[m].," p. 25, l. 13), for it enables us to "Distinguish between the Man, & his present State" ("J[m].," p. 52). "Learn therefore . . . to distinguish the Eternal Human . . . from those States or Worlds in which the Spirit travels. This is the only means to Forgiveness" ("J[m].," p. 49, ll. 72-74).

Blake's unique power of castigating evil therefore—*e.g.*,

> "The Harlots cry from Street to Street
> Shall weave Old Englands winding Sheet" ("Auguries of Innocence")—

is not in conflict with, but the basis of, his unique compassion for its victim and perpetrator.

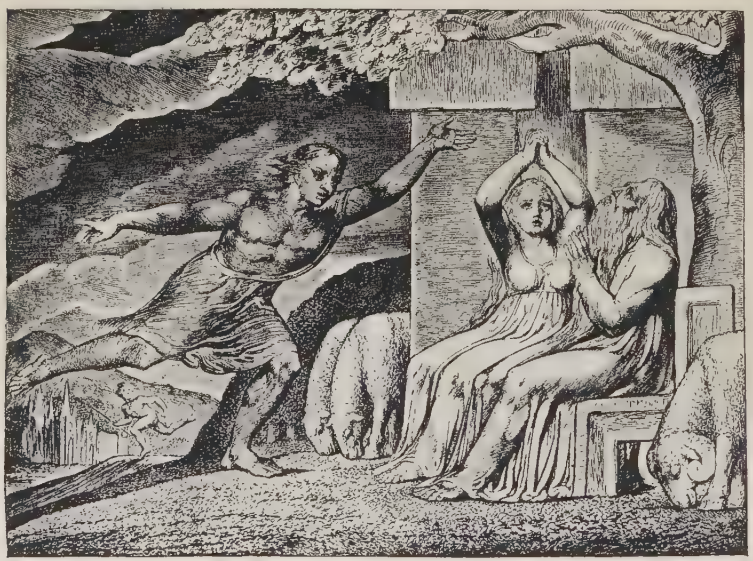
> "O whom
> Should I pity if I pity not the sinner who is gone astray" ("J[m].," p. 31, ll. 34-5).

(*The sublimation of desire is further treated* infra, *p.* 128.)

And there came a Melsenger unto Job & said the Oxen were plowing & the Sabeans came down & they have slain the Young Men with the Sword

Going to & fro in the Earth

& walking up & down in it



And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking
there came also another & said

The fire of God is fallen from heaven & hath burned up the flocks & the Young Men & consumed them & I only am escaped alone to tell thee

W. Blake invent & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs March 3 1825 by Will. Blake N° 3 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION IV

"What is the price of Experience, do men buy it for a song,
Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No it is bought with the price
Of all that a man hath,—his house, his wife, his children" ("F. Z.").

HERE we return to the story, and it is a relief to escape with the messengers into the open air, despite the depth of tragedy that awaits us in the grief of Job and his wife, who are found sitting beneath their tree and receiving the tidings of disaster in close succession.

The symbolism of this design is comparatively simple. The thatched barns are gone, only a remnant is left of the flocks and herds. But as yet the Gothic church, symbolising the spiritual wealth of Job's life,[1] still stands; for the two messengers,[2] being shown with left feet foremost, must be supposed to announce material disasters only.

In the next and following designs the church is replaced by Stonehenge-like erections and massive square-set masonry. These symbolise what Blake calls the "Druidical" religion of Law and Duty, as opposed to the Spiritual religion of Art.[3]

[1] *Vide* note 2, p. 90, Illus. i.

[2] Blake, like the Greek sculptors, worked for himself and the Gods alone. There is a third messenger on the sky-line just under the knee of the first, and in a good original, by the aid of a glass, one can see that this third messenger is unmistakably represented with right leg foremost. He perhaps indicates the spiritual disasters which are to follow Job's earthly losses. It may be significant that he is behind the Church as yet untouched.

[3] The lapse from Spiritual Innocence to Druidic Law, and then the rebuilding of

In the margin above, Satan, whose back is turned, goes forth upon the earth with left foot advanced, and a sword in his left hand. The little figures at the corners are Job's dead joys.

The design, which is actually the smallest in the series, is beautifully set in its margin. The calm of the great tree, of the solid masonry and of the sheep unconcernedly grazing on either side of the patriarch, is invaded by the tempestuous inrush of the messenger, whose outstretched arm and leg dictate the lines of the design. The effect of speed is greatly increased by the alternating direction of the messengers and the disturbing motion seems to reverberate into the distance.

Jerusalem by Christ, is set forth in the poem on p. 27 of "Jm.," where the golden pillars of Jerusalem (v. 1) give place to the "Druid Pillars" of Satan (v. 10). Satan, however, is reclaimed in verse 19, and in the present work a corresponding idea will be found in Illus. xviii.

Cp. "O pitious Sleep O pitious Dream: O God O God, awake I have slain
In Dreams of Chasti(ti)ty & Moral Law I have Murdered Albion: Ah!
In Stone-henge & on London Stone & in the Oak Groves of Malden
I have Slain him in my Sleep with the Knife of the Druid."
("Jm.," p. 94, ll. 22-25; *cp. Ibid.*, p. 92, ll. 24-27, etc.)

Did I not weep for him who was in trouble Was not my Soul afflicted for the Poor

Behold he is in thy hand but save his Life

Then went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord

And it grieved him at his heart

Who maketh his Angels Spirits & his Ministers a Flaming Fire

London, Published as the Act directs March 6 1826 by Will Blake No 3 Hanway Court Strand

W Blake inventor & sculp

ILLUSTRATION V

"Devils are False Religions" ("Jm.," p. 77).

"Satan . . . drawing out his infernal scroll . . . upon the clouds of Jehovah, to pervert the Divine voice in its entrance to the earth . . . Saying I am God alone, there is no other: let all obey my principles of moral individuality" ("Mn.," p. 7, ll. 19-26).

"O Lord descend and save" ("Jm.," p. 45, l. 16).

The loss of every outward good has not changed Job's inward mind, and he and his wife, in all their desolation, now proceed to live their new life of poverty in unshaken devotion to all that they held right in their days of wealth. Job, accordingly, is shown giving one of his last two loaves to a beggar. His wife clings to his arm and the angels, hovering right and left, lift their hands in wonder. But the most striking part of the design is heaven. And we must learn to read the happenings which it represents in Job's soul if we are to understand even his outward world. On earth, not only the sheep have disappeared, but even the patriarchal tree has gone, while (most significant of all) the Gothic church is replaced by a druid altar.[1] The very mountains begin to grow bleaker and more harsh, as though to express the great change that has passed into his world.

In Heaven, the seat of war in Job's soul, Satan has returned for fuller powers against the man he has set out to destroy, having failed to provoke him to impiety by the loss of all he possesses. In the Bible Satan's second onslaught consists in the infliction of

1 "The Druid Temples of the Accuser of Sin" ("Jm.," p. 98, l. 49).

"sore boils," which to our modern ears sounds like an anticlimax after the loss of sons and daughters. But Blake represents the second crisis as still more dire in its effects upon Job's inner world, than it is on the earth below. Satan almost succeeds in overturning Heaven and making it into hell. The contagion of his presence has infected the seraphs themselves, who are now seen bathed in flames like his own. He has gained some terrible power over Jehovah himself, whose whole figure betrays grief and suffering in strange contrast to his divine calm, in the second Illustration, before he first deputed his power to the Fiend. There he sat remote and passionless, unmoved by the rush and rhythm of the rest of the design. Here we see him almost unseated and his halo half sunk beneath the shades of earth. Satan appears to have given a direful wrench to the stability of Heaven, carrying God downwards and leftwards, a motion resisted by the resolute thrust of the Deity's right foot and knee, and the planting of the book in his right hand, upon the steps of his throne.

Before attempting to explain how Satan damns Job in such an act as we see here, it is necessary to reiterate that Satan being in Blake's system falsity of *thought* can turn any *act* however noble to his ends. If we think wrong we are wrong, for "Mental things are alone real," [1] and the devil can make virtue as damning as vice. "One Error not removd will destroy a human Soul." [2] Describing in his "Last Judgment" essay how devils (whom he elsewhere declares to be "False Religions") [3] "torment the just," Blake says: "He who performs works of mercy, in any shape whatever, is punished and, if possible, destroyed—not through envy, or hatred, or malice, but through self-righteousness,

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 200).
[2] "Jm.," p. 46, l. 11.
[3] "Jm.," p. 77.

that thinks it does God service, which God is Satan." [1] Job's religion, now symbolised by " the Druid Temples of the Accuser of Sin " in the background is the " Druid Law . . . a False Holiness hid within the Center." [2]

I confess that I do not see how anyone who did not already know something of Blake's thought could detect in the marginal text above the design Job's condemnation out of his own mouth. " Did I not weep for him who was in trouble ? Was not my Soul afflicted for the Poor ? " But so it is. Pity for the poor is not really good for there ought to be no poor to pity.[3] It should be a matter of course that we share equally with a fellow-man, and to instance it as an act of saving righteousness is to call attention to the very sense of superiority in the act which robs it of true humanity. The belief that in performing " works of mercy in any shape whatever " we are doing something meritorious poisons every act of humanity, making it a subtly selfish attempt to save our own souls in the name of love and religion ; it is, after all, the worship of Satan in the belief that it is a tribute to God.

Job's thought makes him divide his meal indeed but not something of greater worth. It will not be until the nineteenth

[1] " V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 199).

[2] " J[m]." p. 69, ll. 39, 40, *i.e.*, of course, " The Selfish Center " (" J[m]." p. 71, l. 7). *Vide* also note 3, p. 111, Illus. iv. *Cp.* " Stony Druids . . . Sway'd by a Providence opposd to the Divine Lord Jesus " (" J[m]." p. 50, ll. 2 and 4).

[3] *Cp.* I heard a Devil curse
Over the heath and the furze.
' Mercy could be no more
If there was nobody poor,
And Pity no more could be
If all were as happy as we ! '
Rossetti MS., " I heard an Angel singing "
(Sampson, 1913, p. 112).

Illustration that we shall realise entirely what it is that he is still hugging to himself, and only at last surrenders. But, meanwhile, we may understand that *giving* cannot be in the eyes of eternity an intrinsically better thing than receiving, for either act presupposes the other. A giver implies a receiver. It is impossible that "goodness" belongs to one and not the other act. And the beggar, if he accepts in the right spirit, may be doing a better thing than Job if he gives in the wrong one.

But it must further be noticed how this error of Job's is itself an effect of his materialism. It is Job's belief that we can have property in the material necessities of life, "in what is Common to all in [Christ's] Kingdom,"[1] that misleads him. The material nature of the gift is here doubly emphasised, for the episode is placed on the left side of the design (relative to Job and Jehovah), and the bread is both given and received with the left hand. To attribute virtue to *any* gift to a brother would argue a lack of spiritual perception. But there is a special sense in which the arrogation of the right to bestow on our fellow-men the material necessities of life is a usurpation by the Satanic selfhood of the bounty of heaven.

> "For Where-e'er the sun does shine,
> And where-e'er the rain does fall;
> Babe can never hunger there,
> Nor poverty the mind appall."[2]

And this brings us to the critical point of the interpretation. It is Job's misconception of the value and possibilities of material things, and of the corporeal life, that makes him (all unwittingly) erect his corporeal man into the place of Deity, as though it were his to give or withhold a man's daily bread; and for the only time

[1] Thornton (*cp.* E. Y., i. p. 126). [2] "Holy Thursday," "S. E."

in the book, the definitely earthly man is shown with the right foot uncovered. In all other places where Job's right foot is made the more prominent, his spiritual man is not separately shown, and both aspects are therefore included in the one figure. Job is attempting then to make a God and Heaven upon the earthly plane.[1] His effort is far nobler than his son's attempt to rescue his individual family from the surrounding distress, but essentially it is based on the same fallacy; a false conception of material values. The gentle angels that float on either side of Job, and seem to give his act the seal of heavenly approbation, must not be conceived of as individuals,[2] but are probably Job's own mild thoughts, by which he strives to guard and preserve his mundane heaven. "There is a constant falling off" of angels from God,[3] Blake says. And it is noteworthy how much less robust and virile these angels are than those around the throne, or indeed than any others in the book.

Before leaving this design, we must look once more at heaven. It is Job's Titanic attempt, the more dangerous for the very reason that it is so heroic, to make the things of earth usurp the place of heaven, that is the real secret of Satan's power above. Symbolically speaking, it is the appearnace of Job's right foot on earth that necessitates the uncovering of God's left foot in heaven, in order that the balance of the Divine humanity, Satanically disturbed,

[1] *Cp.* "Striving to Create a Heaven in which all shall be pure & holy
In their Own Selfhoods" ("Jm.," p. 49, ll. 27, 28).

[2] Blake gives a reasoned justification for his love of personifying thoughts and influences in his final note to Lavater's "Aphorisms" (Ellis, p. 151). The argument is concluded thus: "For these reasons [principally that—'It is impossible to think without images of somewhat on earth'], I say that this Book is written by consultation with Good Spirits, because it is Good."

[3] "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 268).

may be restored. The Nemesis of all such efforts to create a righteousness of higher sanction than that of pure human love, is that "Attempting to be more than man, we become less." [1] Nevertheless, there is a kind of Providence in things—so Blake believed—which makes a man's actions produce the experience needed to purge away his errors.[2] And Job's bestowal "of all his goods to feed the poor," which is as yet wanting in perfect charity, is to lead him through the experienced pains of poverty to the "more excellent way." So far from his merit securing him against the material results of his act (as he pleads that it ought), it is those very results that are to bring home the needed lesson. In the sixteenth Illustration, where both God and Satan once more appear together with the earthly Job, the Fiend is finally hurled into the abyss, and there have entered into the halo of Deity little figures of weeping angels that speak of true human compassion; that touch of earth which becomes a feature of the Divine mind in virtue of the perennial act of incarnation, producing the inward knowledge of human suffering, so conspicuously absent in Job's Jehovah as he first appears (Illus. 2).

Job is henceforth naked until in Illus. 13 he is "clothed with the Divine mercy!" [3] The appearance, amid thorns and flames in the margin, of the unveiled serpent indicates a further stage in Job's undoing.

It is natural to contrast this design with Illus. 2. It stands in the same position between one showing Job's outward life and

[1] "F. Z." (*cp.* "Vala," ix. 706).

[2] "for all things are so constructed
And builded by the Divine hand that the sinner shall always escape."
("Jm.," p. 31, ll. 30-31, etc.).

For further treatment of Blake's conception of the Divine ordering, *vide* Illus. xvii.

[3] Letter to Butts, 10th Jan. 1802 (Russell, pp. 101-2).

one showing the unhindered triumph of Satan. In both, the two worlds appear, the inner interpreting the outer and leading up to the sequel. Even the margins follow similar lines of decoration. But what a wonderful contrast the two designs present. Illus. 2 is conventional and elaborate. The figures are such as might be (in some cases are) found in other Blake designs.[1] Care has been lavished on the decorative detail and upon the drawing of every figure. But Illus. 5 is swift in conception and execution. It belongs to the moment and, though it is, as a matter of fact, partly composed from earlier inventions, it gives no impression of being a construction but seems a true vision born of the thought it utters. What it lacks in loving elaboration it gains in poetry. Heaven especially is more beautiful. The dead white of the divine halo is tempered. The Deity no longer sits coldly above the seraphic group but sinks as it were into its midst and is swept into the movement and emotion of events which sway through the design. The Satanic energy has converted Job's universe from a static to a dynamic one, and if it is less splendid it is surely more interesting and human.

[1] The Deity is like the Christ in the "Blair's Grave" Judgment, and is interestingly similar in attitude to the triple-crowned Papal Urizen on p. 9 of the "Europe." (I suspect that this explains the six locks of hair standing out from the head in three pairs, Illus. 2.) The Satan is a version of the Orc on p. 3 of "Urizen." The advancing son is like Adam (reversed) in the tenth Illustration to "Paradise Lost"; and so forth.

Naked came I out of my mothers womb & Naked shall I return thither
The Lord gave & the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord

And smote Job with sore Boils
from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head

London as Act directs Published April 8 1825 by Wm Blake 13 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION VI

"Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sih" ("Jm.," p. 21, l. 4).

This great design represents Satan's complete dominion over all that Job has. His body is prostrated in disease, the patriarchal courts lie ruined and deserted, and his wife, like the symbolic sun, sinks into black deeps at his feet. Satan—huge and ruthless—sways the world. Nowhere does Blake succeed in combining a greater sense of vast and vague oppression with bitter and concentrated venom. The wonderful identification of Satan and his weapons with the thundercloud; the sky itself descending loaded with black and scorching sin on his left, while poison shafts wing spiritual death on his right;[1] and a sea of night engulfs the setting sun above Job's wife; all speak agony and despair that is at once overwhelming and intense. The invention represents, as we are to see, Blake's final description of what *earth* becomes for the victim of Job's creed with its utter sterilisation of the creative side of man's life. In a later illustration (Illus. 11) we are to find a parallel description of what becomes of such a man's heaven.

Job's error is essentially the same as before, but, as it there

[1] The figures of Sin and Death in the "Paradise Lost" designs first appear in the second design, and in the tenth the former holds vials belching flame and the latter darts (*vide* "Liverpool Booksellers" Edition). But *cp.* "Poetical Sketches," p. 62, "The arrows of sin stick in my flesh." ("The Couch of Death," Sampson, p. 42.)

had relation to nutrition, it is here related to generation, the two constituting the " vegetable " regions of man.[1] It is therefore in a sense sexual and involves the loss of his wife, but in saying this one has to remember that sex symbolises for Blake the whole creative or artistic side of man,[2] and that even in its surface manifestation we must not expect Job's error to be sexual vice like that of his sons but rather something which passes for sexual virtue.

Interpretation follows along three converging lines. First, of course, are the main features of the design itself. Satan's position upon Job's prostrate form, his wife's retirement to his feet and collapse into despair, the sun sinking in the black sea, the Satanic weapons with convergent thrust towards Job's loins, and Job's own face resolutely averted from the thoughts tormenting him and even from his wife, whom he touches only with his feet.[3]

[1] "Or-Ulro" and "Al-Ulro," etc. ("M[n]," p. 34). These two constitute what Blake calls the Vegetable life, because they are functions shared with the vegetable kingdom.

[2] " O holy Generation, Image of regeneration " (" J[m]," p. 7, l. 65).

[3] The well-known tempora version, now in the Tate Gallery (reproduced in Keynes, facing p. 180), differs in several respects from the engraving. The most notable difference is in the disappearance of Satan's wings, which are replaced by cloud. This is surely much stronger, but as often happens its origin may have been symbolic. All Job's disasters are ultimately due to his own errors, and it is because of the patriarchal religion in which he has brought up his sons that they perish. It is just possible therefore that the only winged Satan in the series is the Satan winged upon them by Job's thoughts in Illus. 3.

Apart from this there is no unnatural light from Job's feet, no appearance of the wife's right, no left predominance in the sun, all which features are symbolically connected and link up the design with the rest of the series. This introduction of new symbolical features is perhaps a help to interpretation, for it calls attention to the points that specially relate the design to the rest of the series. But it somewhat increases the difficulties of exposition, for one seems to be calling away attention from the great mood in which the original invention was conceived to minor details. These details, however, are in no sense inconsistent with the great original conception but enrich it with a far more definite meaning.

Turning next to the prophetic books we find some light as to the nature of Job's disease. In the "Four Zoas" we read of "The dark body of Man left prostrate upon the crystal pavement/Coverd with boils from head to foot, the terrible smitings of Luvah." [1] In the same work Luvah, who is one of Blake's mythological persons, is described as the "prince of Love, the murderer," [2] that is to say no doubt of the "Love" that :—

> ". . . seeketh only Self to please,
> To bind another to Its delight,
> Joys in another's lack of ease,
> And builds a Hell in Heavens despite."

But if Job is the victim of this selfish "love" it must be through some perversity of thought, as his charity in the last Illustration was turned by his thought to spiritual selfishness. "All is Eternal Death," cries the Giant Albion in a despairing passage in "Jerusalem," "unless you can weave a chaste Body over an unchaste Mind!" [3] This is, of course, impossible, and the pollution of Job's mind is suggested a few lines above : [4]

> "The disease of Shame covers me from head to feet, I have no hope.
> Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sin.
> Doubt first assailed me then Shame took possession of me."

His mind is unchaste, in fact, not through the boils of lust, but of some kind of shame and unbelief.

It is at this point that we must turn to our third line of investigation and consider the symbolism which relates the design to others in the series. First we must notice the peculiar fact

[1] "F. Z." ("Vala," iii. ll. 81-2). (In revising Blake changed Man into Albion here. *V. infra*, n. 4, p. 140.)
[2] "F. Z." ("Vala," i. l. 310).
[3] "J^m.," p. 21, ll. 11, 12.
[4] "J^m.," p. 21, ll. 3-5.

that Job's face is dark and his feet luminous.[1] This is connected with the descent of Deity towards earth in the last Illustration, and the darkening of his halo by earthly shades. God's descent was with the left foot, and the light from Job's feet is especially from his left, whence it streams upon his wife's right knee and up to her loins. And, as Job in response to the appearance and descent of Deity's left foot shows right only, so here Job's wife, for the only time, uncovers her right foot alone.[2] We thus get a close symbolical repetition of the previous design, and whatever the error in Job's attitude to God it is in some sort echoed here in his wife's attitude towards himself. Blake was surely always conscious of the Miltonic conception that as a man to his Deity

[1] The head is normally the seat of spiritual "light," and the foot of darkness. *Cp.* "thy immortal Head, in which Eternity dwells" ("J^m.," p. 86, l. 10; *cp.* "J^m.," p. 24, l. 10; "M^n.," p. 3, ll. 7, 8), etc.,

> "May God who dwells in this dark Ulro & voidness, vengeance take,
> And draw thee down into this Abyss of sorrow and torture"
> ("J^m.," p. 23, ll. 38-9).

Ulro is this life ("J^m.," p. 44, ll. 21-2, etc.), and in a passage in "M^n.," it is used as equivalent to the foot ("M^n.," p. 19, ll. 4 *ff*).

[2] It is difficult to exaggerate the unusualness of this foot-position of Job's wife. In all Blake's designs it is not easy to find more than one or two cases outside this book of women uncovering the right foot alone. One of the foolish virgins (Gilchrist, ii. p. 223; Binyon, Plate 85), and the Magdalen kissing the feet of Christ (Gilchrist, ii. p. 239; Binyon, Plate 53) are among the very few. Practically always if women uncover one foot only it is the left. (*V. infra*, note on Blake's Magdalen, p. 217.)

This fact I take to be connected with Blake's idea that womanhood is not eternal. It is so to speak an emergency creation to save man from utter destruction, but to claim permanence is an attempt to secure the permanent imperfection of Man.

> "Why will thou give to her a Body whose life is but a Shade?
> Her joy and love, a shade: a shade of sweet repose:
> But animated and vegetated she is a devouring worm:"
> ("J^m.," p. 12, ll. 1-3).

so is his wife towards himself.[1] But there is one other place in the series where the same peculiar relation is shown. The wedded son in Illus. 2, while showing both feet, stretches forth his left to meet his wife's right and she shows right only. Fair as that relationship looked we found its Nemesis in the hermaphroditic figure in the next Illustration.

With these parallels to help us there cannot, I think, be much doubt as to Blake's meaning. Job's error in the last Illustration was in thinking of daily bread as something material, and his error

One of the plots against Humanity in " Jerusalem " contains this line :

" And the fury of Man exhaust in War, Woman permanent remain."
(" J[m]," p. 82, l. 35).

He speaks of the disappearance of Sexes in the resurrection when Albion recovers his Humanity.

" Sexes must vanish & cease
To be when Albion arises from his dread repose " (" J[m]," p. 92, ll. 13-14).

For he says " Humanity is far above Sexual organisation " (" J[m]," p. 79, ll. 73-4). But the individual identity is of course permanent and can be clothed in male or female form at will.

" Individual Identities never change nor cease " (" M[n]," p. 32*, l. 23).

" Man in the Resurrection changes his Sexual Garments at Will " (" J[m]," p. 61, l. 51).

Cp. also " Urizen," ch. v. verse 10, also " J[m]," p. 79, ll. 70-3, and Appendix, " The Creation of Eve."

[1] " In a word she was formed on the Miltonic model, and like the first Wife Eve worshipped God in her Husband—He being to her what God was to him. Vide Milton's ' Paradise Lost '—*passim*." (" H. C. R. Rem.," Symons, p. 294).

Cp. in the " Milton " the Emanations (which are feminine) say :

" But you O our Fathers & Brothers, remain in Eternity
But grant us a Temporal Habitation ; do you speak
To us : we will obey your words as you obey Jesus
The Eternal who is blessed for ever & ever. Amen."
(" M[n]," p. 30, ll. 28-31.)

here is in thinking of his wife's body as something carnal.[1] He shared his bread equally, but without that perfect *sense* of equality which alone could give his act spiritual worth. And here the disease of shame makes him try to avert his gaze from all his lower man, with the result that his face itself becomes dark and, while scrupulously faithful to his marriage bond, he takes from it the only thing that can give it worth. His wife joyously gave up her bread, but when her gift of love is received with " doubt " and " shame " her heart is broken, and the light of her soul is plunged in despair.

> " All Love is lost ! terror succeeds & Hatred instead of Love,
> And stern demands of Right & Duty instead of Liberty." [2]

As Satan here represents Job's soul, the sinking sun symbolises his wife's. Satan's right foot is in advance of his left to correspond with Job's left predominance, but the symbolic sun, whose rays overarch his wife's figure, is shown with a left predominance to correspond with her right foot.[3] This emphasises her separation. As Job conceived the bread as something which it was his to give or withhold, he has now driven his wife to conceive herself corporeally and her bodily love as something it is hers to give or withhold, the subject of " stern demands of Rights and Duty instead of Liberty." As the beggar was a suppliant to Job, *he* must now be a suppliant to his wife.[4] But in the spiritual life,

[1] " Man has no Body distinct from his Soul. For that calld Body is a portion of Soul " (" M. H. H.," p. 4).

[2] " J^m.," p. 22, ll. 10, 11.

[3] The three rays on the sun's left, as against the two on its right, probably have this meaning. *Cp.* the divine sun's correspondence with Job in Illus. 18, p. 195.

[4] " In eternity woman is the emanation of man ; she has no will of her own ; there is no such thing in eternity as a female will." " V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 196). This we are inclined to say sounds very convenient for the male, but we must remember

though our bodies may be present, there can be no bodily want, for, when it is love that asks us to go without, satisfaction is as perfect as when love asks us to be filled.[1]

In Illus. 12, where Job begins to see the folly of his self-centred creed, he puts forward his right foot towards his wife and she meets it with her left. The divine harmony is restored, the error of either is removed; his in thinking of her as belonging to his corporeal life rather than his spiritual, hers in thinking of her own life as an independent thing, separable from their joint life. Job is henceforth naked, until in Illus. 13 he is "clothed with the Divine Mercy."[2] The margin shows his broken crook, telling of the passing of pastoral innocence.[3] Above and around are a heaven and earth in which only infernal and destructive creatures dwell. Happiness can return no more till it has been wrung out of experience itself.

that, strictly speaking, there is no male will either, there is nothing but the will of Man which includes both the male and the female in one. (*Cp.* "Jm.," p. 90, ll. 1, 2, and the following passage.) *Cp.* also *supra*, note 2, p. 124, and App. F, p. 227, *infra*.

[1] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 96, ll. 20 *ff.* Also we find a similar if not identical idea in the address "To the Christians" ("Jerusalem," ch. iv.) where abstention is demanded for the sake of Art. "We are told to abstain from fleshly desires that we may lose no time from the Work of the Lord. Every moment lost is a moment that cannot be redeemed; every pleasure that intermingles with the duty of our station is a folly irredeemable, & is planted like the seed of a wild flower among our wheat. All the tortures of repentance are tortures of self-reproach on account of our leaving the Divine Harvest to the Enemy, the struggles of intanglement with incoherent roots. I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination. Imagination the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, & in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more, etc." ("Jm.," p. 77).

[2] Letter to Thomas Butts, 10th Jan. 1802 (Russell, pp. 101-2).

[3] A reviewer has suggested that we have here "the signs of decrepitude in Ecclesiastes xii. The silver cord [shown by the spiders ?], the grasshopper and the pitcher broken at the fountain."

NOTE ON BLAKE'S IDEAS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

The very word "marriage" normally symbolises for Blake a state of bliss and union. For example, his title "*Marriage* of Heaven and Hell," his use of the word "Beulah," which signifies marriage (*v. infra* note 3, p. 169, Illus. xiv.), and his frequent references to Jerusalem as *Bride* of the Lamb. Yet marriage may be a "hearse" ("London." "S. E.") and family life a curse. ("J^m.," p. 27.) For Blake has no use for marriage as a bond. He speaks of :—

> "Drawing the free loves of Jerusalem into infernal bondage,
>
> That they might be born in contentions of Chastity & in
> Deadly Hate between Leah & Rachel Daughters of Deceit & Fraud
> Bearing the Images of various Species of Contention
> And Jealousy & Abhorrence & Revenge & deadly Murder,
> Till they refuse liberty to the Male : & not like Beulah
> Where every Female delights to give her maiden to her husband."
>
> ("J^m.," p. 69, ll. 9-15.)

He told Crabb Robinson "that he had learned from the Bible that Wives should be in common" ("Rem.," Symons, p. 303). And Gilchrist reports : "'Do you think,' he once said in familiar conversation, and in the spirit of controversy, 'if I came home and discovered my wife to be unfaithful, I should be so foolish as to take it ill ?'" (Gilchrist, i. p. 374).

But we must remember that "he understands by the Bible the Spiritual Sense" (*v. supra* p. 44), and then I think it becomes clear that Blake's consistent concern was to distinguish between selfish desire, which only begets division (*cp.* "J^m.," p. 90, ll. 1 *ff.*), and (whether in marriage or not) "builds a Hell in Heavens despite" ("S. E."), and spiritual desire, which begets the higher unity among all mankind, and builds Jerusalem. This may naturally be typified in the relation of man and wife, but is *not limited* to that relation, and is only complete in the race, Christ. We can only enter heaven by developing our higher, never by binding our lower, man. "The treasures of heaven are not negations of passion, but realities of intellect, from which all the passions emanate, uncurbed in their eternal glory. The fool shall not enter heaven be he ever so holy." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, p. 197). In other words wives should be "in common," where, as in heaven, desire has been perfectly spiritualised. But this does not preclude a unique relation, such as Blake's own to his wife, for "He who would see the Divinity must see him in his Children/One first, in friendship & love : then a Divine Family ; & in the midst/Jesus will appear." "J^m.," p. 91, ll. 18-20.

What! shall we recieve Good
at the hand of God & shall we not also
recieve Evil

And when they lifted up their eyes afar off & knew him not
they lifted up their voice & wept. & they rent every Man his
mantle & sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven

Ye have heard of the Patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord

W. Blake inven. & sculpt.

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ILLUSTRATION VII

"Corporeal friends are spiritual enemies" ("Jm.," p. 30, l. 10).

With this Illustration the drama enters upon a new phase. In the Bible Satan is not mentioned again after the friends appear. But, being for Blake an inward state,[1] he could only finally disappear with the rejection of error,[2] and we shall see him twice again in illustrations that are more Blakean than Biblical (Illus. 11 and 16). Meanwhile Blake conceives of the Friends as carrying forward the attack of Satan into the citadel itself, Job's own soul, as yet unassailed. For hitherto, though the patriarch has lost all that he holds most dear—his house, his wife, his children—he has remained captain of himself. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord." "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not also receive evil." These are the words of a still unconquered soul. But friendship, as it is the greatest of all human blessings,[3] is also the soul's severest test. "It is easier," Blake says, "to forgive an Enemy than to forgive a Friend."[4] "O God," prays one of

[1] "Jm.," p. 35, l. 13, and p. 49, ll. 67 *ff.*, etc. [2] Illus. 16.

[3] "The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship." "M. H. H.," p. 8.

"Nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood." ("Jm.," p. 96, l. 28.)

[4] "Jm.," p. 91, l. 1. *Cp.* Humourous Epigram in MS. book (Sampson, p. 216).

"Thy friendship oft has made my heart to ake:
Do be my Enemy—for Friendship's sake."

his mythic characters, " protect me from my friends, that they have not power over me. Thou hast giv'n me power to protect myself from my bitterest enemies." [1]

A more important passage for the interpretation of this design is the one that declares " Corporeal friends are spiritual enemies." [2] These friends, as their foot position indicates, are corporeal. We shall see in the four following designs how they induce in Job various frames of mind, but all alike tending to his destruction. Patience, despair, invincible faith and wild spiritual terror equally help in the destruction of his unenlightened soul. This is the first of a group of five (Illus. 7-11) hinging on the terrific vision of Eliphaz (Illus. 9), which turns Job's attention to inward things; the two preceding it portraying Job's attitude to his outward disasters, the two succeeding it showing his relations to God, in both cases faith alternating with despair.

The design is reminiscent of the messengers of disaster (Illus. 4), with which it forms a powerful contrast. The tree is replaced by hard masonry suggesting a cross,[3] the church by

[1] " M[n]," p. 7, ll. 5, 6. *Cp.* also

" To do unkind things in kindness ! with power arm'd to say
The most irritating things in the midst of tears and love
These are the stings of the Serpent ! " (" M[n]," p. 10, ll. 32-34).

Blake was certainly very exacting. He says, no doubt referring to those who claimed his friendship :

" It is easy to acknowledge a man to be great & good while we
Derogate from him in the trifles & small articles of that goodness
Those alone are his friends who admire his minutest powers."
(" J[m]," p. 43, ll. 56-8.)

[2] " J[m]," p. 30, l. 10 ; " M[n]," p. 3*, l. 26 ; and *cp.* " J[m]," p. 91, ll. 15 and 16, and also letter to Thomas Butts, 25th April 1803 (Russell, pp. 114, 115).

[3] As pointed out by Mr Charles Elliot Norton. I append here a note, as it stands, made by me in the first edition of this study :

" *I am glad to find this observation in Mr Charles Elliot Norton's book, written in*

shattered pillars and druid altars, the messengers by the friends, and the wife's grief at their disasters by her dismay at Job himself and his faith. The sheep and even the woods are gone, but the spirit is yet unconquered. Job's deeply-set sun throws up rays above the horizon and seems to illumine both the figures of the friends and of the stones behind Job. The very earth at his feet shines with a gentle light, and the margin shows four sleeping figures, including Job and his wife in " Innocence " and recalling the words : " Mercy changd Death into Sleep." [1]

America 1875 (*Boston, Osgood & Co.*), *but unfortunately not seen by me till my book was in the press. Mr Norton also notes the cross in Illus.* 10, *and with needless modesty suggests the true meaning of the "pagan cairns." He is also, I believe, the only editor to note* both *the sunset and sunrise. "As it was sunset in the opening scene, it is sunrise now," he says in his commentary to Plate XXI.*

[1] Tirzah, v. 2. " S. E."

Lo let that night be solitary
& let no joyful voice come therein

Let the Day perish wherein I was Born

And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days & seven nights & none spake a word unto him for they saw that his grief was very great

London. Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by Will. Blake N° 3 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION VIII

"It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted" ("F. Z.").

In the previous Illustration it was Job's right foot that was slightly advanced. Here it is the left, and the design represents the soul's descent into depths of corporeal despair.

In the Bible the change is so abrupt from Job's attitude of perfect resignation and trust to bitter lamentation and cursing that an explanation seemed necessary and has been supplied by modern criticism, which shows that the first two chapters, being a prose introduction, are imperfectly adjusted to the ancient poem with which the third chapter begins.[1]

But for Blake there was no difficulty. In the first place, the very fact of the friends' compassion would, in his view, be likely to lead to Job's breakdown. For "pity divides the soul and man unmans," [2] and the Friends, by forcing Job's attention to his own sorrows, undermine his fortitude, which is only restored by Elihu when, coming in wrath, he takes away his attention from himself to the great universe about him (Illus. 12). "I have tried to make friends by corporeal gifts," Blake says, "but have only

[1] "There is a contradiction, therefore, between the introduction, in which he is represented as eminently patient, and the dialogues that follow, in which he indulges in passionate complaints and accusations of God. This contradiction is so marked as to induce many scholars to reject the introduction as a later addition. . . ." Prof. Oort ("Bible for Young People," tr. by Philip H. Wicksteed, vol. iv. chap. xiv. p. 164).

[2] "M[n].," p. 6, ll. 19-20.

made enemies; I never made friends but by spiritual gifts, by severe contentions of friendship & the burning fire of thought." [1] The design represents the utter absence of all spiritual life. Even Satan is nowhere suggested. The mountains of desolation symbolise the "demonstrative truth" which for Blake meant materialism.[2] The masonry, the very clouds, speak a dead weight of oppression, and the human group itself is a crushed mass of corporeal despair rising to a kind of pinnacle of mountainous grief in Job's hopeless gesture and streaming eyes.

The great cloud on Job's right recalls the belt separating earth and heaven in other designs, and suggests the plunge of the inner life into abysmal depths below the horizon. The margin shows heavy clouds weeping upon thorns, weeds and funguses, pity, rotting the soul.[3]

[1] "Jm.," p. 91, ll. 15-17.

[2] "Jm.," p. 28, ll. 9-12.

[3] "For pity divides the soul" ("Urizen," ch. v. verse 7). *Cp. ib.* ch. ii. v. 8 (Sampson, 1913), and ch. v. verse 10.

Cp. "... go take your fiery way
And learn what tis to absorb the Man, you Spirits of Pity & Love."
("Jm.," p. 29, ll. 70, 71.)

"... drinking groans of victims weeping in pity and joying in the pity."
("Jm.," p. 80, ll. 55-6.)

Cp. also "Jm.," p. 80, ll. 67-70. "Jm.," p. 43, ll. 78-9.

Shall mortal Man be more Just than God? Shall a Man be more Pure than his Maker? Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints & his Angels he chargeth with folly

Then a Spirit passed before my face
the hair of my flesh stood up

W. Blake inv. & sculp.

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ILLUSTRATION IX

"All Love is lost! terror succeeds & Hatred instead of Love
And stern demands of Right & Duty, instead of Liberty"
("Jm.," p. 22, ll. 10, 11; also "F. Z.").

"God out of Christ is a Consuming Fire."
Legend on Allegorical Painting (now in Tate Gallery).

THIS marvellous Invention represents Eliphaz rebuking Job by revealing his own vision of Deity. All except Eliphaz look up at it as something outside themselves. For him alone it is within, an aspect of his own mind and life. And as the Deity was before represented in the likeness of Job, being Job's inmost self, so this Deity is in the likeness of Eliphaz. It is significant that of the earthly man the left side only is shown in the design, whereas it is his Divine-man's right side that we see. The dreaming form above is again the earthly man, smitten with deadly terror at the vision of his own spiritual being.[1] His God is not the God of love, nor the God of life and action; for his brow is stern and his arms are bound about him. Before him no creature can be justified. "Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints," as the text in the margin says, "& his Angels he chargeth with folly." A fierce

[1] Eliphaz here shows the dual vision of himself and his God as Job does in Illus. 20. The correspondence between the earthly man and his representative in heaven is shown in a way similar to that which identifies Job's sons in Illus. 2 with their forms in heaven—but there it was the feet that identified them; here it is the raised left hand. Here, as in Illus. 14, Job worships God with his right hand and Eliphaz with his left—though it is a different God.

light that is half darkness flashes from his feet and form, and breaks through the cloud belt upon Job's wife.

Terrible as this vision is even to Eliphaz himself, it is for Job the beginning of salvation. Hitherto we have seen him in the midst of spiritual presences—God, Satan and angels—but he himself has not seen them. He has never understood what happened because he has never seen the spiritual facts behind what happened. But once his eyes have been turned to inward things he is to find them ever about him on every hand. This is indeed a vision of terror, for " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," but " Perfect love casteth out fear," and the counterpart of the present vision is the one in Job's ascent (Illus. 17), where the Human Deity appears in the form of Christ, putting Job's friends to shame.[1]

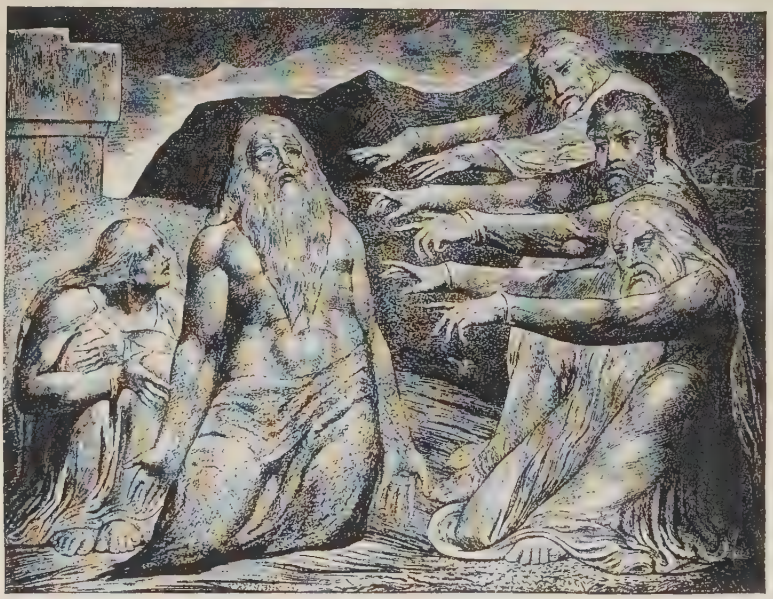
The design, even more perhaps than any other in the book, has the quality of unexpectedness. It seems to burst a window into a new world, and once seen can never be forgotten. The wonderful silhouette of Eliphaz' figure is almost reproduced in reversed and vaster form in the shape of heaven. His attitude of stability set firmly on his base also characterises his heaven, in contrast to the confusion of body and mind into which Job and his wife are thrown. The margin is filled with heavy clouds and trees that bear no fruit or foliage—they are sterile like the Deity.

[1] *Cp.* " In Heaven Love begets Love : but Fear is the Parent of Earthly Love :
And he who will not bend to Love must be subdued by Fear."
" Jm.," p. 81, ll. 15, 16.

But he knoweth the way that I take
when he hath tried me I shall come forth like gold

Have pity upon me: Have pity upon me: O ye my friends
for the hand of God hath touched me

Though he slay me yet will I trust in him



The Just Upright Man is laughed to scorn

Man that is born of a Woman is of few days & full of trouble
he cometh up like a flower & is cut down he fleeth also as a shadow
& continueth not And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one
& bringest me into judgment with thee

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ILLUSTRATION X

". . . however loving
And merciful the Individuality; however high
Our palaces and cities, and however fruitful are our fields,
In Selfhood, we are nothing; but fade away in mornings breath"
("Jm.," p. 45, ll. 10-13).

From the dramatic point of view this Illustration is the greatest in the book. It represents a last conflict between temperaments and convictions that must remain irreconcilable at the last. The characters stand out in almost Shakespearean relief; Job immutably convinced that his life and lights are unassailable, and earnest to challenge the verdict of God; the Friends, representing the general public, varying amongst themselves, but solid in their indignant scorn of Job and his obstinate defiance of indisputable truth; the wife emotionally one with her husband, but intellectually agreeing with what appears the only tenable view. Above all, and embracing all, is the profound thought of the great dramatist Blake himself indicated in the design only by one little symbol. The tiny flower visible beneath the hand of Eliphaz (and the text below referring to it) speaks the utter frailty of "man that is born of woman" as distinct from Man himself, the Divine Humanity, God—which not one of the characters of the drama has yet understood.

The exposition must begin with Job's point of view, as expressed in the texts in the upper margin.

With eyes now turned by the vision of Eliphaz to inward things,

yet stung to self-defence by its inhumanity, he appeals to the God of his own vision in whom his faith is unshaken. Job is conscious of having fulfilled every demand of perfect righteousness, and God, who sees all, must know this and must, in the end, justify him. During the time of trial his friends should pity rather than reproach him, but in any case he puts himself in God's hands, not theirs, and will abide by God's own sentence, though it be death itself. Only let God himself appear as he appeared to Eliphaz and his answer will be final.

To the Friends all this is nothing else than unutterable blasphemy. They have given Job every chance to confess his guilt, by showing that the very angels of God may go astray,[1] and yet he obstinately asserts an innocence which is equivalent to a terrible indictment of the Almighty. For if Job is not guilty then most assuredly God is either powerless to save him, or else most infamously and appallingly unjust. To defend himself is therefore to accuse God.

For the Blake student the picture here given of the Friends is full of more "recondite" interest. They represent undoubtedly a phase of the satanic trinity, a threefold unity of accusers. We have two other instances of this idea in Blake's mind. On p. 93 of "Jerusalem" the accusers of Socrates are represented as a triplicated, creeping figure pointing the finger of accusation, their unity being expressed by a legend written across the three backs. There is also a design Blake calls Satan's Holy Trinity—"The Accusers of Theft, Adultery, Murder."[2] As a trinity, therefore,

[1] *Vide* text in upper margin of last Illustration.

[2] "The Accusers of Theft, Adultery, Murder. A scene in the 'Last Judgment.' Satan's Holy Trinity. The Accuser, the Judge and the Executioner" (Gilchrist, ii. p. 279).

The legend is engraved about the plate.

we may take their feet (one left and two right) to be a confirmation of the attitude of their hands, which shows both right and left, pointing scorn and accusation, but the right always a little in advance of the left. This also is the attitude of Job's wife. Her right hand actually touches Job's arm, and her right foot is slightly the more advanced.

The point is perhaps more interesting than important, but it enables us, I think, to understand exactly what Blake considered the Friends did accuse Job of. They accuse him of iniquitous falsehood, both as regards himself *and his God*. He is false in asserting his own faultlessness, because the Law of Right is one that no natural man (nor the angels themselves) can completely fulfil.[1] But this implied assertion of God's injustice is a still more devastating falsehood. And the man guilty at the same time of such falsehood in the corporeal and in the spiritual plain may be justly credited with every crime, both of act and thought.

How different and yet how terribly like is the attitude of Job's wife. She speaks, not on theoretical grounds, but from an intimacy of knowledge which there is no escaping. And when she points out in all gentleness of compassion (protesting with both hands, but touching him with her right) that there *have* been errors, yes—corporeal *and* spiritual—Job, whom the storm could not strip, uncloaks to the pale sun, and in his conviction of sin (which I cannot doubt Blake intended to show his wife as inspiring) we are to read the sudden vision of infernal horror which bursts upon him in the next Illustration. Here he is to see that, in

[1] "No individual can keep these Laws, for they are death to every energy of man, and forbid the springs of life" ("J[m].," p. 35, ll. 11 and 12).

Cp. "Do you think there is any purity in God's eyes—The angels in heaven are no more so than we" ("H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825, Symons, pp. 256-7).

seeking individual perfection, Hell becomes inevitable, for the very God he then appeals to is Self or Satan.[1]

And with all these points of view Blake's own view agrees while it yet more profoundly disagrees. Of course there have been errors. Christ himself was not free from such.[2] But Job's punishments were not, as the Friends asserted, evidence of his guilt. On the contrary, it was his virtues that destroyed him, and which must destroy any man equally with his vices so long as he remains unregenerate.[3] For the unregenerate life is the life of separation,[4] in which we appear to be divided in bodily form from our fellow-men. And the supreme good being a spiritual or poetic identification of ourselves with others [5] is the contrary of the bodily life. In the same way, the life of the spirit being

[1] " Satan . . . to pervert the Divine voice in its entrance to the earth . . . Saying I am God alone there is no other : let all obey my principles of moral individuality " (" M[n].," p. 7, ll. 19-26).

[2] " H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 255).

[3] " Man is born a Spectre or Satan and is altogether an Evil, & requires a New Selfhood continually " (" J[m].," p. 52).

[4] " Albion," in his evil dreams of night, condemns the " labours of loves," and makes " solid rocks " of " demonstrative truth," in order " that Man be separate from Man " (" J[m].," p. 28, ll. 5-12), etc.

Cp. " J[m].," p. 31, ll. 7-10, etc., where " Albion " (that is Humanity, *vide* list of verbal emendations to " Vala," where Blake often changes " Man " to " Albion " in revising, *cp.* E. Y., iii., " Vala," pp. 149-168, especially " Night," iii. p. 152), is divided into parts, each of which take up " the articulations of a mans soul," and Los finds these " hidden within in the minute particulars of which they had possessd themselves."

[5] " When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter
Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)."
(" J[m].," p. 88, ll. 3-4.)

" Every kindness to another is a little Death in the Divine Image nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood " (" J[m].," p. 96, ll. 27-28).

" To Give his vegetated body to be cut off & separated that the Spiritual body may be Reveald " (" F. Z.," *cp.* " Vala," viii. ll. 261-2).

the life of universal union, it is clearly impossible that spiritual righteousness should be attributed to separate individuals. We may take our choice, but we cannot have both. We can either shut ourselves up in our own physical individuality, in which case we are not righteous; or we may enter the universal Spiritual life, in which case our righteousness is not our own private property. But we cannot at the same time remain units, and accredit those units with what only belongs to the whole as a whole.

The case of a good man such as Job being enslaved by this error, is expressed in a passage in "Jerusalem" where the perishing little flower as the symbol of unregenerate man is almost suggested (l. 13):—

> "The Man is himself become
> A piteous example of oblivion. To teach the Sons
> Of Eden, that however great and glorious; however loving
> And merciful the Individuality; however high
> Our palaces and cities, and however fruitful are our fields
> In Selfhood, we are nothing; but fade away in mornings breath.
> Our mildness is nothing: the greatest mildness we can use
> Is incapable and nothing: none but the Lamb of God can heal
> This dread disease: none but Jesus: O Lord! descend and save!"
>
> ("Jm.," p. 45, ll. 8-16.)

The design itself is one of the most interesting and expressive. It begins round the little flower and finally surges round Job, breaking upon him in wave behind wave of accusation, up past the shattered walls and pillars behind Bildad (symbols of a faith that will not stand), till it flows in the black mountains of "demonstration"[1]

[1] "By demonstration man alone can live and not by faith.
My mountains are my own, and I will keep them to myself:
The Malvern and the Cheviot, the Wolds, Plinlimmon & Snowdon
Are mine, here will I build my Laws of Moral Virtue:
Humanity shall be no more: but war & princedom & victory."

("Jm.," p. 4, ll. 27-31.)

which connect Job and the Friends (for their premises are the same), tossing in contention for awhile, till it falls precipitously above the wife. Her background is the gentle hill, above which is the only break of white light in the sky. But, behind the wife, rises resolute and massive her crosslike faith, backed by the black cloud of grief which unites her with Job, as the mountains connected him with the Friends.

The major movement of the design is therefore counter-clockwise (against the current of creation), and to this motion Job himself is bent. But from Job's wife there rises in the pillar, continued in the cloud, a clockwise movement which is ultimately to restore the redeeming trend of things. That Job should be in this way saved through his wife is deeply characteristic of Blake, for, though woman is in a sense associated with all our woe (and she is, I think, to be regarded as the immediate cause of the next Illustration), yet, in the end, salvation is born of woman.

The lower margin shows us birds of prey whose life is maintained at the expense of others.[1] The things like thin trees are probably not trees at all, but down-descending "tubes," some of them apparently springing from the sharp-edged wings of the Fiend. They speak of the division of the divine-life into the separate forms of earth. "I sunk with cries of blood . . . rolling in tube-like forms shut up within themselves descending down."[2]

The strange bow (if it is a bow) bent above, and the chain falling below, may very probably be taken to symbolise the two aspects of Satan's "principles of moral individuality." Job's faith

[1] The necessity of the preying of life on life is sometimes put by Blake into the mouths of his fallen or diabolical personations, apparently representing the supreme cynicism ("Jm.," p. 42, l. 49); also "F. Z." "That Life lives upon Death, & by devouring appetite/All things subsist on one another." *Cp.* "Vala," vii. ll. 387-8.

[2] "F. Z." *Cp.* "Vala," vii. ll. 284-6.

in individual duty and self-constraint, rather than in liberty guided by a passionate love of all mankind, would thus be symbolised by the tightly sprung bow; the friends' error of coercive and penalising law by the chain.[1] Job is to learn in the horror of the coming vision that his religion is the same as that of his friends, against which he has appealed. He learns charity to them at the same time that his own infernal error burns itself out of his soul.

[1] The grounds for the above suggested interpretation are of several kinds. The chain is sufficiently obvious, in itself and in its meaning. But the probability that the arch above represents a bow, is derived from such a passage as—

> " A bended bow is lifted in heaven, & a heavy iron chain
> Descends link by link from Albions cliffs across the sea to bind
> Brothers & sons of America," (" America," p. 3, ll. 7-9).

The suggestion that the bow represents restraint comes from the corner figures who punctuate (perhaps even personate) the two ends of the bow. They appear to be clinging on to the square frame, and thus resisting the bow's outward spring, and, what is even more significant, their hands are draped in their gowns, which recalls the arm-bound figure of the Deity as he appeared to Eliphaz in the previous Illustration (Illus. 9), and almost certainly speaks of the righteousness of prohibitions, with its deadly curbing of the active life.

So far the weakest point is the character of the bow. But I am afraid one must suspect Blake of associating the ring formed by the bow and chain with the diurnal solar cycle. This destroys the bow as a " bended bow," but accounts for its spreading as it descends and for the figure on the spectators' left (dayspring), being a youth, while the one on his right (nightfall) is more aged. The descending chain is certainly frequently associated with Los and the Time-process (" Urizen," ch. vii. vv. 2, 3, p. 18; and " J[m]," p. 11, ll. 1, 2; *cp.* Illus., " Urizen," p. 19; " J[m]," p. 6). The association of the bow with Satan and the Moral law occurs again in " Jerusalem ":

> " When Satan first the black bow bent
> And the Moral Law from the Gospel rent "
> (" J[m]," p. 52; Poem, v. 5).

My bones are pierced in me in the night season & my sinews take no rest

My skin is black upon me & my bones are burned with heat

The triumphing of the wicked is short. the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment

Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light & his Ministers into Ministers of Righteousness

With Dreams upon my bed thou scarest me & affrightest me with Visions

Why do you persecute me as God & are not satisfied with my flesh. Oh that my words were printed in a Book that they were graven with an iron pen & lead in the rock for ever For I know that my Redeemer liveth & that he shall stand in the latter days upon the Earth & after my skin destroy thou this body yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for Myself and mine eyes shall behold & not Another tho consumed be my inward thought Image

Who opposeth & exalteth himself above all that is called God or is Worshipped

W. Blake invent & sculp

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ILLUSTRATION XI

"Cloth'd in the Serpents folds, in selfish holiness demanding purity" ("Mⁿ.," p. 10, l 46).

Here we reach the bottom of the pit. Lying upon his narrow bed in utter isolation from all human fellowship, Job becomes a prey to the hideous phantoms of his own spiritual creed, and the God he has been worshipping appears in response to his appeal. Below him three demons now take the place of the three friends. Job looks down terrified at the flames into which they are dragging him. One clutches both his feet, another grabs his loins and a third holds up the chain which is to bind his head and imprison his mind in the fetters of materialism. Above is the still more horrible form of his Deity, whom he tries to hold off. The alternatives to which this Being points are both unutterable hell, though the one to which his right hand points purports to be heaven. For Blake says in his notes to Lavater's "Aphorisms," "Hell is the being shut up in the possession of corporeal desires," [1] this is the obvious and flaming hell below. But in his "Vision of the Last Judgment," he says: "In Hell, all is self-righteousness" [2] and this is the hell above, where the two rounded stones represent

[1] "Lav.," 299 (*cp.* Ellis, p. 133). The whole note is as follows: "To hell till he behaves better, mark that I do not believe there is such a thing literally, but hell is the being shut up in the possession of corporeal desires which shortly weary the man, For All Life is Holy." *Cp.* "What are the Pains of Hell but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness, & devastation of the things of the Spirit" ("Jᵐ.," p. 77). *Supra*, p. 110.

[2] Gilchrist, ii. p. 199.

the tables of the prohibitive law; the ideal of which is the punishment of sin, rather than the liberation of man's passion for love and beauty out of which all human good is born.[1] The Deity who offers this horrible alternative is actually Satan, as we see by the cloven hoof of his left leg.[2] But he is Satan in the likeness of Job; he is, in fact, the Great Selfhood worshipped as God.[3] Coiled round him, clogging his feet and binding his loins and then following his left arm, is the Serpent,[4] who symbolises Nature[5] as opposed to Art and the regenerate life.[6] It is Nature in this aspect that enforces Satan's alternative—the Hell of sensuality or the Hell of self-righteousness—both individualistic and hostile to the deeper humanity.

The marginal texts are important. The first two (in the corners) are strictly in place in the story, and may even at one time have suggested the design. The third (above in centre) is from a speech of Zophar's: "The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." In a sense, no doubt, this refers to poor Job, as Zophar of course intended. But it is rather to his Satanic and slanderous Self,[7] as represented here by

[1] "The tables of stone which utter lightning," *vide* "The design of the Last Judgment" (first description as given in J. T. Smith's Biographical Sketch "Letter to Ozias Humphrey." Symons, p. 383); *cp.* "Garden of Love," "S. E.," "Gates of Paradise" [Prologue], etc., etc.

[2] "Where Satan making to himself Laws from his own identity,
Compell'd others to serve him in moral gratitude & submission
Being call'd God; setting himself above all that is called God."
("M^{n}.," p. 9, ll. 10-12.)

[3] ". . . the Great Selfhood
Satan, worshipd as God by the Mighty Ones of the Earth"
("J^{m}.," p. 33, ll. 17, 18).

[4] "M^{n}.," p. 10, ll. 46-7 quoted above p. 145; *cp.* Job. xxvi. 13.

[5] "F. Z.," "Vala," iii. ll. 97 and 101; "J^{m}.," p. 29, ll. 76 and 80, etc.

[6] "[Satan] calls the Individual Law, Holy, and despises the Saviour" ("M^{n}.," p. 11, l. 5).

[7] *Vide supra*, note 2, page 95.

the evil Deity, than to his eternal and true identity. The fourth, "Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light and his Ministers into Ministers of Righteousness," is taken from the Epistles, slightly modified (2 Cor. xi. 14-15). Blake, as we have already seen, believes that we make a religion out of our most profoundly selfish instincts, and he uses the text to express what he says to the "Deists," in "Jerusalem" (p. 52): "Man must & will have Some Religion: if he has not the Religion of Jesus, he will have the Religion of Satan, & will erect the Synagogue of Satan, calling the Prince of this World, God; and destroying all who do not worship Satan under the Name of God." The text immediately below the design is compiled from Job vii. 13-14. The longer one beneath is nearly the same as Job xix. 22-27, until we come to the last sentence, where Blake alters "though my reins be consumed within me" of the Bible to (presumably his own) "tho consumed be my wrought Image." This suggests that Job is now learning the insignificance of his personal life as being merely the "wrought image" of his own eternal being. Another significant alteration is the change of "*worms destroy this body*" into "destroy *thou* this body." The *thou* refers, no doubt, to Nature as the Satanic power,[1] which is sometimes symbolised by the serpent and sometimes (especially man's mortal nature) by a worm.[2]

The fierce oppressive power of the design is not only due to the scorching heat of its flames, which entirely fill even the margin (the very locks of the cruel Deity's head are lambent fires),

[1] *Cp.* "H. C. R. Diary," "Nature is the work of the Devil," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 265).

[2] "F. Z.," "Vala," ix. l. 624, etc.; *cp.* "Urizen," chap. vi. verse 5, "The worm lay till it grew to a serpent."

nor to the bitter clouds and jagged lightnings but to the dream-like subjectivity which its crowded confinement suggests. Job is utterly alone, and for that very reason less himself than ever. For we find ourselves in the not-ourselves, and Job cannot here escape in any direction from the prison of his own mind. And yet there are two movements in the design (and perhaps two meanings in the texts), one of which is redemptive. The movement of the lower fires is counter-clockwise; and again the demons at the feet and loins pull down while the one at the head rises with the flames. But the motion of the Deity and even of the serpent, though deeply depressive, is prevailingly clockwise. No depth of error is irredeemable, is not in fact "part of God's design" so long as it does not oppose the "current." And "even in the depths of Hell" [1] "Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light and his Ministers into Ministers of Righteousness." [2]

Job's plea of invincible self-justification written in the flames below and the subscribed commentary (taken from Thess. ii.), indicating that he thereby exalts *himself* "above all that is called God or is Worshipped," though it explains his descent into the Pit, is ultimately to lead him out of it. For the course of error is no less redemptive than truth, and for a man like Job there is only one method of salvation, though for weaker spirits there may be an easier way, as we shall see in Illus. xviii. Job must go through with his error to the bitter end,[3] until actual experience has broken it in his hand. A man of less heroic calibre, or, as

[1] "Jm.," p. 12, l. 15.

[2] *Cp.* 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.

[3] "If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise" ("M. H. H.," p. 7). "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom" (*Ibid.*). "No man can embrace true art till he has explored and cast out false art." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195), etc.; *cp.* Introduction, note 2, p. 55.

Blake would say, of less "intellect," [1] would have conceded his guilt before he had learnt to understand his error. But Job knows that, according to his lights, he has been scrupulously faithful. And it is by holding fast to this truth, that he has come at last to see that his light itself was darkness. From this abyss of horror Job is aroused by the wrath of Elihu.

Before going on to the next Illustration we will pause a moment to consider and compare the structure of the two parts of the drama, the ascent and the descent. Part I consists of a series of six (Job and Satan), followed by a series of five (Job and his friends). Part II consists of a series of five (the God in Nature), followed by a series of six (the God in Christ or Man); the present Illustration being common to both parts and completing the "five" series both of the descent and of the ascent. We may therefore describe the whole as divided into Four Acts, of which the central scene is common to Acts II and III. In this case Act I would be Satan's seizure of Job's house and children followed by that of his wife, and Act II the Satanic triumph over Job's soul through the instrumentality of the Friends.

Probably the simplest way of regarding the quintet which opens the ascent is to treat 13 as the response and complement to 11 with 12 as the interpreting link, 14 and 15 being a couplet expanding the theme of 13. But the process is the opposite of the earlier trios. Illus. 1 is the fair outside while Illus. 2, turning our attention *within*, prepares us for the frightful inner aspect shown in Illus. 3. A somewhat similar method knits the next

[1] "The treasures of heaven are not negations of passion, but realities of intellect. . . . The fool shall not enter into heaven, let him be ever so holy." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 197). *Cp.* Note on p. 109*ff*.

trio 4, 5 and 6, and the quintet 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. But here the frightful picture of "Nature" in Job's *inner* world (Illus. 11) yields to the noble serenity of Nature in Illus. 13 by the turning of Job's attention *without* in Illus. 12. But though this is certainly the relation of 11, 12 and 13, and though 14 and 15 are certainly a development of the theme of 13, Blake has harmonised this structure with a more completely symmetrical one in which the theme of 11 and 13 (Nature's round) reappears in 15 as Leviathan and the theme of 12 (the Stars) in 14. Even this does not exhaust the inter-relations as the stars appear in 15 and the serpent in (the margin of) 14.[1]

[1] The complex structural schemes upon which Blake built up his Job Invention are referred to above (Preface, pp. 33-35) in connection with Mr Damon's discovery of a sevenfold scheme.

For God speaketh once yea twice
& Man perceiveth it not

In a Dream in a Vision of the Night
in deep Slumberings upon the bed
Then he openeth the ears of Men & sealeth their instruction

That he may withdraw Man from his purpose
& hide Pride from Man
If there be with him an Interpreter One among a Thousand
then he is gracious unto him
& saith Deliver him from going down to the Pit
I have found a Ransom

For his eyes are upon
the ways of Man & he observeth
all his goings

I am Young & ye are very Old wherefore I was afraid

Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with Man to bring
back his Soul from the pit to be enlightened
with the light of the living

Look upon the heavens & behold the clouds
which are higher
than thou?

If thou sinnest what
doest thou against him or if thou be
righteous what givest thou unto him

W Blake invenit & sculpt

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ILLUSTRATION XII

"Thus were the stars of heaven created like a golden chain
To bind the Body of Man to heaven from falling into the abyss" ("F. Z.").

The spirit of the marginal design here shows that the crisis is past. In place of the fierce flames of the preceding page, we see Job sleeping peacefully "in a Dream," as the marginal text says, "in a Vision of the Night, in deep Slumberings, upon the bed,"—and from his body hosts of happy spirits are seen to soar up to the stars.

In the main design, Elihu appears and undertakes to speak on behalf of God to whom Job has appealed. But though he speaks for Deity he expressly claims his own mere humanity. "Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am formed out of the clay"[1]: a passage which Blake does not quote, but symbolises by showing Elihu with left foot forward. But though Elihu is thus expressly represented as "corporeal," he is not necessarily a "spiritual enemy," like the other "friends," for unlike them he comes in wrath. And Blake says, "The man may be the friend of my spiritual life while he seems the enemy of my corporeal, though not *vice versa*."[2] Elihu comes to rebuke and to chastise the corporeal man. God's intent, he says, is to "withdraw Man from his purpose & hide Pride from Man." And for Blake this text doubtless speaks of the pride and purposes of self-

[1] Job xxxiii. 6.
[2] Letter to Thos. Butts, 25th April 1803 (Russell, pp. 114-5).

righteousness; the great corporeal error of Job and his friends.

The keynote of the Illustration is clearly struck by the stars; both the twelve great luminaries to which Elihu points in the main design, and those to which the marginal spirits ascend. And yet Elihu, whose intervention is the whole theme of the Illustration, does not in the Bible once mention the stars; and Blake's marginal texts, which are exclusively from Elihu's speech, refer only to the heavens and the clouds. The stars, therefore, are Blake's, and we must inquire why he should go out of his way to give them so critical a place in the development of his story of Job.

For Blake the stars were not so very remote or abysmal.[1] But they did at least present a world of beauty that could lift us out of an imprisoning selfhood and which even the depth of midnight could not quench. For further interpretation we must turn to the margin and study the spirits emanating from Job's sleeping body. These are unquestionably what Blake calls "emanations," and he says, "Man is adjoined to Man by his Emanative portion."[2] Here the emanations adjoin Job to the stars, and it seems not improbable, therefore, that just as the sun is the symbol of Job's own inner spirit (either as the halo of Deity, or rising and setting on the horizon), so the stars may be the souls of other men, as

[1] Gilchrist tells an amusing tale of Blake as follows: "Some persons of a scientific turn were once discoursing pompously and, to him, distastefully, about the incredible distance of the planets, the length of time light takes to travel to the earth, etc., when he burst out 'Tis false! I was walking down a lane the other day, and at the end of it I touched the sky with my stick'" (Gilchrist, i. p. 371). One wonders whether these "scientific" people meant the planets or the stars. In either case Blake knew all about them, having been there. "He laughd at my proposal; but I by force suddenly caught him in my arms & flew westerly thro' the night . . . passed all the planets till we came to saturn, here I staid to rest & then leap'd into the void, between saturn & the fixed stars." ("M. H. H.," p. 19.)

[2] "Jm.," p. 44, l. 38; *cp.* "Jm.," p. 88, l. 10.

distantly perceived by him across the abyss of nature, which in this corporeal life separates man from man.[1] The marginal spirits at all events are Job's "emanative portion," taking him out of his self-centred world and joining him with the spirits of other life in the universe. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with Man," says Elihu in the margin, "to bring back his Soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."

A closer study of the marginal design yields some interesting further suggestions, which tend to show that Blake still adhered in his old age to the position set forth in "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" as to the divine character of the body; though we must never forget that even there it is the body regarded as "a portion of Soul."[2] In his "Vision of the Last Judgment" he says that "in Paradise they have no corporeal and mortal body," yet this must be read in the light of the previous sentence, where he says that it is possible to "live in Paradise and Liberty . . . in spirit, but not in the mortal body . . . *till after a Last Judgment*,"[3] but he also says in the same work, "Whenever any individual rejects error, and embraces truth, a Last Judgment passes upon that individual."[4]

This clearly suggests that we may live in Paradise, *even in the*

[1] "Shuddering
With their wings they sat in the Furnace, in a night
Of stars, for all the Sons of Albion appeard distant stars.
Ascending and descending into Albions sea of death."
("Jm.," p. 50, ll. 18-21.)

Cp. "F. Z.," "Howling & Wailing fly the souls from Urizen's strong hand,
For from the hand of Urizen the myriads fall like stars"
("Vala," ix. ll. 321, 322).

[2] "M. H. H.," p. 4.
[3] "V. L. J.," Gilchrist, ii. p. 198 (italics mine).
[4] *Ibid.*, Gilchrist, ii. p. 196.

body, when we have rejected error. Which suggestion is abundantly confirmed by much that Blake wrote in his earlier days. In his notes to Swedenborg's "Angelic Wisdom," he says, referring to a passage about keeping the understanding in spiritual light, "This, Man can do while in the body." [1] To another passage where Swedenborg says, "Man, in whom the spiritual Degree is open, comes into that Wisdom when he dies, and may also come into it by laying asleep the Sensations of the Body," Blake points the moral by saying, "this is while in the Body," and also, "This is to be understood as unusual in our time but common in ancient." [2]

In his notes to Lavater's "Aphorisms," he says, "Man is a two-fold being, one part capable of evil and the other capable of good. That which is capable of good is not also capable of evil, but that which is capable of evil is also capable of good." [3] And though he does not elsewhere always admit the twofold character of man, yet that is because when the evil element or aspect of that "part capable of evil" has been rejected (as it is by a "Last Judgment"), then the two parts are indeed one; "heaven and hell," in fact, are married.[4]

It is a kindred idea which here seems to be treated in the margin. We see the stars approached by two streams of spirits ascending from Job's sleeping body; the one from his head and the other from his feet. The former rises straight up unaided, but the latter lie in deep sleep upon his lower man until gradually roused and wakened by the guiding angels, who hold them out a scroll and direct them up towards heaven. This suggests that the expressions or emanations, even of our lower or corporeal being, are

[1] "Swed.," p. 33.
[2] "Swed.," p. 220.
[3] "Lav.," 479 (Ellis, p. 141).
[4] This subject is further treated in Illus. xviii.

capable of " adjoining man to man " when enlightened. And that once awakened they may link us with the same heavens as our spiritual ideas do.

This again connects itself with the very clear indications that the *stars*, whatever else they may symbolise, are the point of contact between the spiritual and the corporeal visions of life, or the irreducible minimum of spiritual reality which even the corporeal vision cannot quench ; the fragments of universal light which Night itself cannot drown. " Thus were the stars of heaven created like a golden chain / To bind the Body of Man to heaven from falling into the abyss." [1] In " Jerusalem " he says that " Los reads the Stars," Los being the prophetic spirit labouring in this life to preserve the divine vision,[2] whereas his " Spectre," the rationalising and materialistic power in Man [3] " reads the Voids Between the Stars." [4] The point of the contrast being that to both, the actual appearance is the same ; it is in the reading of it that the difference appears. Los and the Spectre both represent corporeal truth,[2] the one enlightened and the other dark.[5]

[1] " F. Z.," *cp.* " Vala," ii. ll. 266-7.

[2] " J[m].," p. 44, ll. 28-31 ; " M[n].," p. 23, l. 71, and " J[m].," p. 95, ll. 17-20 (where, however, Los himself is relatively to his eternal Zoa, a Spectre).

[3] " J[m].," p. 10, ll. 7-16, etc., etc. [4] " J[m].," p. 91, ll. 36, 7.

[5] There is an interesting passage in the " Milton " which further supports this idea of the stars being the point of contact between the illusory material universe and the true spiritual one. The stars here seem to be equated with " the Substances of Creation," in contrast to the " Newtonian Voids between " (" M[n].," p. 37, l. 46) :—

> " For the Chaotic Voids outside of the Stars are measured by
> The Stars, which are the boundaries of Kingdoms, Provinces
> And Empires of Chaos invisible to the Vegetable Man."
>
> (" M[n].," p. 37, ll. 47-49.)

(The reason why they are invisible to the " Vegetable Man," though not to his " Reasoning Power," or " Spectre," is explained at the end of the passage from the " Milton " quoted note on pp. 164 *f.*, " As to that false appearance, etc.") In three

But now once more to examine the minutiæ of the marginal design. We see that there are actually two streams of emanations moving each way. From the scroll in Job's left hand proceed certain dim unformed figures that are finally lost in the current near the point where the higher stream is rescued by the angels. Again from Job's hair proceeds a stream which appears to be consumed in hot flames, kindled by veins of fire, some of which issue from the scroll. The soaring spirits above them proceed, not actually from Job's head but from a scroll that issues from his right side. Apparently, therefore, both our spiritual and corporeal emanations have their higher and lower forms. Those from the right-hand scroll are highest, those from the left-hand scroll are lowest. But from the lower man proceed redeemable and potentially vital and beautiful spirits, just as from the higher man proceed " brands " fit only for the burning. The four streams of spirits, therefore, describe (*a*) single vision introduced by Satan (Illus. 2), material and corporeal (lost in earth); (*b*) twofold vision introduced by Eliphaz (Illus. 9), spiritual in its way, but cruel[1] (ascends in smoke and flame); (*c*) threefold vision introduced by Elihu (Illus. 12), earthly but redeemed (guided to the stars); (*d*) fourfold vision introduced by Christ (Illus. 17), spiritual and eternal, and soaring to the stars of its own nature.

If, therefore, the stars are what we have supposed, the reading

passages in " V. L. J." the stars are associated with children, representing nations or generations (Gilchrist, ii. pp. 188, 191, 192). Mr Damon says (p. 230) that the stars represent for Elihu " the glorious mechanism of the universe, the ordered Reason which rules all things." Elihu's is a limited truth for the universe for Blake is human. When seen by Elihu with Reason dominant it appears as separated stars (individuals). But " Imagination " sees these swept into the universal light of Day (Christ). *Vide* note *z*, p. 32.

[1] *Cp.* Twofold vision in poem to Butts. 22 Nov. 1802. (Russell pp. 109 *ff.*)

of the design becomes clear. Once grasp the supreme reality of other lives in the universe, it then becomes a matter of secondary importance whether we are "in the body" or delivered from it. Once recognise that the supremely significant points in a material universe are the human spirits (which includes for Blake every creature and thing) which it embodies and environs, heaven is still within our grasp. On the other hand, a spiritual faith which is shut up in ideas of the importance and possibility of saving our individual souls, cuts us off from the greater universe, in which is the true life of all humanity. Job's spiritual individualism or self-righteousness is symbolised by the potsherd, the last remnant of which we see here thrown away beneath the feet of Elihu.[1]

The mountains in the background, which first became so awful with the appearance of the Friends (Illus. 7), are not again to wear so savage a form. They now include Job's wife in their span, and their precipitous descent into the abyss, unlike that in Illus. 10, seems rather hers than his. As she listens to the words of Elihu she sees the utter vanity of the importance she has attached to "sin" and "righteousness" with all their unspiritual demands and counter-demands. And in the emergence of her left foot in response to Job's right we see the contrite restoration of the true relation between them.[2] As the story proceeds this is to lift her with him into heavens of infinite beatitude.

The design represents the conflict between the old faith with its familiar accompaniments of heavy masonry, black mountains and ruined halls, and a new faith which is in the end to overwhelm it. The patriarchal group is based on the solid phalanx of the

[1] " . . . as the Potter breaks the potsherds
Dashing in pieces Self-righteousnesses" ("Jm.," p. 78, ll. 5, 6).

[2] *Vide* Illus. vi.

Friends whose world seems to enter like a wedge into the new and unsuspected universe of Elihu and the Stars. Job's face is the centre of the page, and is where we see the new light painfully entering the old world. The Friends sit huddled together unable to resist the interest of what they are hearing, though it seems, like the stars themselves, far too remote to influence them. Yet even into their heavens one star finds its way and the masonry above them is no longer either erect or stable. Elihu standing opposite the group and apart dominates the scene like a being from another world. With his right hand he puts down the Friends and with his left points up to the larger heavens, thus reasserting the clockwise trend of creation.

The texts are all from the speeches of Elihu in the Book of Job. In the crucial one below Job's sleeping figure Blake supposes Elihu to be disparaging ideas of good and evil,[1] a matter fully dealt with in the introduction.[2]

[1] "That was the fault of Plato—he knew of nothing but of the virtues and vices and good and evil. There is nothing in all that. Everything is good in God's eyes." ("H. C. R. Diary," Symons, p. 256.) *Cp.* "Good and Evil are no more." "The Everlasting Gospel" ("Sampson, 1913," p. 155).

[2] *Vide* Introduction, pp. 64 *f.*

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge

Then the Lord answered Job out of the Whirlwind

Who maketh the Clouds his Chariot & walketh on the Wings of the Wind

the Drops of the Dew

Hath the Rain

a Father & who hath begotten

W. Blake invent & sculp

London Published as the Act directs March 8: 1825 by William Blake N: 3 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION XIII

" As the seed waits Eagerly watching for its flower & fruit,
Anxious its little soul looks out into the clear expanse
To see if hungry winds are abroad with their invisible array.
So Man looks out in tree, & herb, & fish, & bird, & beast,
Collecting up the scatterd portions of his immortal body
Into the Elemental forms of every thing that grows.
He tries the sullen north wind, riding on its angry furrows,
The sultry south when the sun rises, & the angry east
When the sun sets the clods harden & the cattle stand
Drooping, & the birds hide in their silent nests. He stores his thoughts
As in a storehouse in his memory he regulates the forms
Of all beneath & all above, & in the gentle west
Reposes where the sun's heat dwells he rises to the sun
And to the Planets of the Night, & to the stars that gild
The Zodiacs, & the stars that sullen stand to north & south
He touches the remotest pole, & in the center weeps
That Man should labour & sorrow, & learn & forget & return
To the dark valley whence he came, to begin his labour anew.
In pain he sighs, in pain he labours, in his universe
Sorrowing in birds over the deep, & howling in the wolf
Over the slain, & moaning in the cattle, & in the winds,
And weeping over Orc & Urizen in clouds & dismal fires,
And in the cries of birth & in the groans of death his voice
Is heard throughout the universe wherever a grass grows
Or a leaf buds, The Eternal Man is seen, is heard, is felt,
And all his sorrows, till he re-assumes his ancient bliss."—" F. Z."

The pure in heart shall see God, and when pride is silenced within, the universe without speaks Deity.

Depth behind depth of beauty and meaning dwell in this wonderful design, which was clearly in the first instance suggested by the figure of Elohim in Michael Angelo's " Creation of Adam."

In the original Hebrew the appearance of Jehovah in the whirlwind is representative of some extraordinary event. His speech is not the still, small voice, it is not the word graven in the

heart, it is not something that all may know. It is a revelation that neither reason nor any earthly wisdom could search out. It is the dread utterance of the King of Kings suddenly vouchsafed in the storm. And Blake, following this conception, makes a distinction between this theophany and every other in the book. By making Deity appear *below* the cloud-belt, which always marks the bound between our earth and heaven, he shows Jehovah not as the power within, which he always is elsewhere in the book, but as the awful Presence visible to the enlightened eye *in* the "current of creation," the natural order of the outer universe. The whirlwind is to be identified as this natural order by its clockwise motion, betrayed by the locks of Job's hair, which it lifts as it rises.

But though the manifestation is in outward nature, it is spiritual and beatific.[1] It is complementary on the one hand to Illus. 17, which shows the inward Christ, it contrasts on the other with the Satanic God of Illus. 11. The relative positions of the divine figures in these two designs is reversed. The Deity moves with an upward motion as against the downward motion of the Fiend; his outspread hands bless and uplift instead of being the agents of spiritual oppression and torment; his human right foot contrasts with the sinister hoof of the evil Deity. There the serpent shows us Nature as the alien and tyrannic power whose coils we cannot

[1] "God is within & without! he is even in the depths of Hell!" ("Jm.," p. 12, l. 15).

> "Pity must join together those whom wrath has torn in sunder.
> And the Religion of Generation which was meant for the destruction
> Of Jerusalem, become her covering, till the time of the End.
> O holy Generation, Image of regeneration!" ("Jm.," p. 7, ll. 62-65.)

> ". . . in Eternal Circle . . . to bring Albion again . . . into light eternal."
> ("Jm.," p. 75, ll. 24-26.)

escape, and here the whirlwind, while sweeping us inevitably into its round, reveals the infinite, indwelling spirit which begets us, and which, in inspired moments, we recognise as our own.

For this Deity is still, and most significantly, in the likeness of Job. After the next two Illustrations, which belong to the same movement as the present one, and further develop its wonderful theme, we shall find him so no more. But the Transfiguration of Job's self into the natural Deity is essential to this phase of Blake's Job symphony. Lest we should miss it, he shows the figure of the patriarch in the margin endlessly imaged as links of the chain that repeats the conception of great Nature's diurnal round. For when once the Self is laid to sleep in man, as we have seen it laid to sleep in the previous margin, it wakes again in infinite multitude, becoming the key and interpretation of the abounding life of the Universe.

> " So Man looks out in tree, & herb, & fish, & bird, & beast,
> Collecting up the scatterd portions of his immortal body
> Into the Elemental forms of every thing that grows."

The passage from Hell to Heaven is through sleep—sleep of the individual in his pride of individuality—passage from the nightmare Job within, to the Infinite and Divine Job recognisable in the vast without. In the margin below are the mighty roots of being in the profound sleep of lower nature, yet strong to beget cloud, rain and wind, and even man and beast.

The Friends are at last silenced by the majesty of Job's vision, and his wife, on whose brow the traces of grief remain, is able to share with him the rapture of insight. For in the last Illustration the relation of the two was restored to what it was in Illus. 5 before Satan destroyed it in Illus. 6. We could then almost see the

delicate movement of his right foot towards her and the swift response of her left. Experience " bought with the price of all that a man hath, his house, his wife, his children," is at last won, and therewith we are to see the restoration first of his wife, who rises with him to bliss. But her unusual position upon his left side (repeated only in Illus. 16 and 18) shows that she and her love are here to be regarded as the first and dearest of his restored possessions.

And this brings us to the heart of the design. For unlike the complementary revelation in Illus. 17, God himself is here upon the left. If the reader will pause to consider what this means, he will discover what is perhaps the greatest conception of the work. For it means nothing less than this, that Job, having lost everything in the world, finds that his wealth is the Universe and its Divinity. He is in short suddenly restored to infinite prosperity by the discovery that in the forgetting of himself he becomes lord of the majestic Whole. Accordingly, disease and destitution vanish, and we see him " clothed with the divine mercy." For though no actual garment robes his upper figure, the appearance of nakedness is gone.[1]

The last piece of symbolism we have to notice is the obscurely discernible balustrade behind Job and his wife. This represents the ' motive ' of the Gothic church and druid altar in the earlier designs, and is expressive of Job's religion. Its effect in the first place is to re-inforce the conception of Job's restored prosperity,

[1] Though less obviously naked than in the previous designs, there is no line where the garments end on his arms or neck ; he is still for a time " naked of natural things."

" Naked we came here—naked of natural things—and naked we shall return ; but while clothed with the Divine mercy, we are richly clothed in spiritual, and suffer all the rest gladly."

Letter to Thomas Butts, 10th Jan. 1802 (Russell, pp. 101-2).

by giving the impression of the scene being enacted upon the broad terrace of a lordly house. But there is a special significance in the form of balustrade. For unlike the pagan cairns and altars or even the Gothic church, it is something that carries the mind away beyond the design into a larger world, the world of which Job suddenly finds himself a part; a part though insignificantly small, still, in virtue of its perfect love, prince and possessor of the whole. In the next design we shall find a similar conception in the infinitely expanded chain of heavenly seraphim. As we have pointed out in the Introduction the design does not represent the final vision. It is what Blake calls Beulah (Marriage), or the threefold vision as distinct from the perfect or fourfold vision, which we can only have after a last judgment. Perhaps we shall not be far from his thought if we sum up the meaning of the design by saying that though God and Paradise may be found and possessed in the outward order Job will scan it in vain for anything higher than his transfigured self, as imaged in every atom of the universe.

> "So Man looks out in tree, & herb, & fish, & bird, & beast.
> "F. Z." ("Vala," viii. l. 54).

NOTE ON DEITY IN THE WHIRLWIND

The appearance of Deity in the Whirlwind below the clouds in this design is one of the most interesting points in the series, as it seems to sanction the idea of there being a divinity in outward or earthly Nature such as Blake sometimes explicitly denies, and never, perhaps, explicitly asserts, though he seems to imply it oftener than is generally admitted (*e.g.* "M. H. H.," p. 12, "my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing," also "J[m]," p. 12, l. 15, etc.). I cannot think that it is here a mere concession to the point of view of the Bible narrative. It is to be noted that Jehovah, though incomparably more noble than in former designs, is still in the likeness of Job, which he ceases to be in, and after, the Last Judgment (Illus. 16). And this leads me to think that Blake deliberately intends to show that outward Nature becomes

real, when seen with true subjective vision. To rightly know the "subject" within, is, in fact, to find unity with the subjects outside us (men, beasts, trees, even stones, etc.), and so to be taken beyond ourselves into a greater whole, merely by going far enough into ourselves. And I suggest that this greater whole may, after all, be not so very different from the external universe as commonly conceived by the unsophisticated (*vide* Appendix E). At all events the "Vegetable Man" keeps something of the eternal vision lost by the reasoner (*vide* note 5, p. 155, etc.).

A remarkable passage in the "Milton," while showing the extent of Blake's subjectivism, clearly shows, I think, that there actually was an "outside" for him, just as real in its own way. It describes how we may start from our own minutest parts or motions ("a red Globule of Man's Blood" or "a Pulsation of the Artery"), and go inwards or outwards to immensity, though the outer is always secondary to the inner :—

> "Every Time less than a pulsation of the artery
> Is equal in its period & value to Six Thousand Years.
> [*I.e.*, roundly speaking, the whole period of history, past and future, as calculated, of course, upon Scriptural data.]
> For in this Period the Poets Work is Done ; and all the Great
> Events of Time start forth & are concievd in such a Period
> Within a Moment : a Pulsation of the Artery . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . every Space larger than a red Globule of Mans blood
> Is visionary : and is created by the Hammer of Los.
> [*I.e.*, it actually exists but is the creation of the prophetic or visionary power in us.]
> And every Space smaller than a Globule of Mans blood, opens
> Into Eternity of which this vegetable Earth is but a shadow :"
>
> ("M^{n}.," p. 27, l. 62—p. 28, l. 22.)

Sandwiched between these two passages is a somewhat whimsical, but very fine, description of the real subjective world each of us lives in.

> "The Sky is an immortal Tent built by the Sons of Los
> And every Space that a Man views around his dwelling-place,
> Standing on his own roof, or in his garden on a mount
> Of twentyfive cubits in height, such space is his Universe :
> And on its verge the Sun rises & sets, the Clouds bow
> To meet the flat Earth & the Sea in such an orderd Space :
> The Starry heavens reach no further but here bend and set
> On all sides, & the two Poles turn on their valves of gold :
> And if he move his dwelling-place, his heavens also move.

Wher'eer he goes & all his neighbourhood bewail his loss :
Such are the Spaces called Earth & such its dimension :
As to that false appearance which appears to the reasoner,
As of a Globe rolling thro Voidness, it is a delusion of Ulro
The Microscope knows not of this nor the Telescope, they alter
The ratio of the Spectators Organs but leave Objects untouchd."
(" M[a]," p. 28, ll. 4-18.)

Yet notwithstanding this intense subjectivism, Blake constantly admits that Eternity is to be found " without " as well as " within " (" J[m]," p. 12, l. 15, etc.), and I can but suppose that he finds it in the life of other beings and loses it only in the non-human environment which appears to separate those lives.

" The Vegetative Universe opens like a flower from the Earths center
In which is Eternity. It expands in Stars to the Mundane Shell
And there it meets Eternity again, both within and without,
And the abstract Voids between the Stars are the Satanic Wheels."
(" J[m]," p. 13, ll. 34-37.)

(for the significance of the Satanic Wheels *vide* Appendix D).

Putting aside all Blake's brilliant whimsicalness and perversity, we find everywhere one consistent feature of his mind. He is determined to base his life on the immediacy of experience. His intolerance of " that false appearance which appears to the reasoner " is that it is constructed from an analysis of experience developing one portion far away from the data of the senses (even as extended by the Microscope and Telescope). It is " Single vision & Newton's sleep " having deliberately cut itself off from the imaginative element inherent in the vision of the simple " Vegetable Man " (*vide supra*, note 5, p. 155). In the moral world this corresponds to the analysis of Man into families and individuals which has its Nemesis in Illus. 3 and 6. " Double vision " is better and worse : better because it recognises the spiritual character of all experience, worse because it is still analytic, and to split the soul of Man into selfish fragments is worse than to split up the human *frame* of things. This double vision finds its Nemesis in Illus. 11, where the spirit Satan wholly possesses the spirit God.

The grand restoration begins when Job succeeds in synthesising the distorted spirituality of Eliphaz (Illus. 9) with the exalted rationalism of Elihu (Illus. 12) in Illus. 13. This he does we must suppose by means of his obstinate fidelity to his own immediate experience, in which the rational and the spiritual have never been parted, so that the starry heavens of Illus. 12 become for him peopled with the seraphim of Illus. 14, Imagination restoring a glorious and beautiful reality to the portentous erection of the materialistic Reason (*cp.* quotation from " V. L. J." top of page 168 *infra*).

But the supreme vision is only known when this new insight is applied not to

the constructed world of the rationalist but to the immediate world of experience itself, not to the vast outer universe of speculation but to the inner life of Job himself.

I have suggested above (note 1, p. 32) that a comparison of Illus. 14 and 20 suggests that possibly Blake conceived God (the threefold) as creating Man (the fourfold) and Man (the fourfold) as creating God (the threefold). If this is so, the final structure is very complete and beautiful, and may be expressed thus: Man by projecting himself into the world of Nature discovers "the infinite in every thing" ("M. H. H.," p. 12), and thus begets God (Illus. 13). But from this world of nature is born Jesus ("J^{m}.," p. 7, l. 67 &c.), who projecting himself into the individual begets the true Man in him (Illus. 17). And then Man again conceives God in the Whirlwind (Illus. 20).

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion

Let there Be Light

Let there be a Firmament

Let the Waters be gathered into one place

& let the Dry Land appear

And God made Two Great Lights

Sun

Moon

Let the Waters bring forth abundantly

Let the Earth bring forth

Cattle & Creeping thing & Beast

When the morning Stars sang together, & all the Sons of God shouted for joy

W Blake Inventor & Sc

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ILLUSTRATION XIV

"I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty" ("V. L. J.").

". . . all Animals & Vegetations, the Earth & Heaven, were contained in the All Glorious Imagination" ("Jm.," p. 49, ll. 13-14).

"The Imagination is not a State: it is the Human Existence itself" ("Mn.," p. 32*, l. 32)

In this great design, where Blake touches the height of his genius, and, indeed, of genius itself, he shows the perennial act of spiritual Creation ever going on in the "Bosom of God, the Human Imagination," and the fusion of this with Universal reality beyond.

Together with the next design it is an expansion of the last, showing, in two aspects, the cosmic heritage Job has discovered as his own. Shortly we shall explore his inner world, but now we are to see the outer universe of which he and each of us is a part. Yet, even so, it has its inner and its outer aspects, and this supreme creation of Blake's genius represents the outer universe as seen with the *inward* eye of poetic imagination.

In the previous design the Deity in the whirlwind showed both feet, for the God of outward nature is partly an imaginative, partly an outward or material, fact. Here we have found the fourfold world of sun, moon, stars and earth, shown as having a similar duality of nature; even God himself, though nearer to pure spirit than the rest, combines the dual nature. He is the poet's inward vision of outward things.[1] He is, in short, the Poetic Genius or Imagination, sustainer of this mighty universe

[1] *Vide supra*, Preface, pp. 18-22 and 30-33; Introduction, pp. 62 *f.*, 75 note, and 76.

of ours that has its roots in outward facts, but is in soul a fourfold chorus of joy and praise. The conception is expressed at the end of Blake's "Vision of the Last Judgment" in one of his best known and most characteristic utterances: "When the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea? Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host crying: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, not with it." [1]

So much has been written as to Blake's denial of the external world that it is necessary to point out that this expression, so far from denying it, assumes it. The happenings of the natural order as described by the materialist are not non-existent, they are only the facts seen with what Blake calls "single vision," the perfect vision being fourfold. The design, therefore, represents the perennial act of spiritual creation ever going on in the "Bosom of God, the Human Imagination," and which is characterised by the four great features of the natural order it spiritualises.[2]

Accordingly the rolling layers of cloud divide the design into the four great worlds of vision, united by the Divine Being who appears, as before, in the spiritual likeness of Job, with right foot uncovered in contrast to the uncovered left foot of the earthly man. Below is the world of time and space; the world as it appears to our bodily senses, shut off from everything but the earth.

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 200).

[2] "The world of imagination is the world of eternity. It is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the vegetated body. This world of imagination is infinite and eternal, whereas the world of generation or vegetation is finite and temporal. There exists in that eternal world the permanent realities of everything which we see reflected in this vegetable glass of nature." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 187).

Above this opens the eternal world within. Here dwells the spiritual Creator, the light of life that illumines the whole universe, but can only be known in its true subjective reality in the here and the now and the me. This inner world is divided into two. Beneath the Deity's right arm there rides forth the sun of the mind,[1] driving the horses of instruction;[2] while beneath his left arm the moon of poetic, or woman's love,[3] controls and guides the serpents of corporeal desires.[4] Love and thought are perennial features of the Divine-Humanity which Blake sometimes associates with Night[5] and Morning[6] and here perhaps connects with the words of the Bible "the evening and the morning were the first day . . . and the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Between these and the seraphs above, we have a glimpse into

[1] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 24, l. 10.
[2] "M. H. H.," p. 9; "F. Z." ("Vala," ii. l. 35).
[3] *Cp.* ". . . Beulahs moony shades and hills
Within the Human Heart" ("Jm.," p. 48, ll. 24-5),
with "Beulah, a Soft, Moony Universe, feminine, lovely" ("F. Z.," *cp.* "Vala," i. l. 204). (In the Book of Isaiah, lxii. 4, the land of Israel is to be called "Beulah" בעולה to signify that it is no more desolate, but is "married," from בעל to possess, to take to wife.)
[4] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 55, ll. 11-13, etc.
[5] *Cp.* also last two verses of "William Bond."

I thought Love lived in the hot sunshine,
But O, he lives in the Moony light!
I thought to find Love in the heat of Day,
But sweet Love is the Comforter of Night.

Seek Love in the Pity of others' Woe
In the gentle relief of another's care,
In the darkness of night & the Winters' Snow,
In the naked & outcast, seek Love there! (Sampson, p. 298.)

[6] *Cp.* "F. Z." ("Vala," i. ll. 287-9), for association of Urizen with the brain and "F. Z." ("Vala," ix. l. 647) for his association with Morning.

the empty abyss representing the void of Nature—the unknown, where we cannot trace the presence of the Divine-humanity. But beyond this again is the universe of stars—the infinite life beyond our life, multitudinous in sea and air and the countless generations of men, with which our Eternal Being, bridging the gulf of Nature, links us in sympathy and spiritual unity. The seraphs are the Sons of God, the poetic emanations of the Divine-Human Imagination.[1] These mingling with the Morning Stars adjoin " Man to Man " and waken harmonies of so intense a joy, that it seems to tremble on the verge of a great sob, in which the eternal grief of the universe is merged in its eternal rapture. " Excess of joy is like excess of grief." [2]

The uplifted arms of the seraphs, like the outspread ones of the Deity below, are probably symbolic of the active life, which brings us into relations with our fellow-beings, giving meaning and liberty to our inward lives, and breaking down the barriers with which the merely speculative intellect bounds itself. Blake's inspired after-thought [3] which led him to add the arms and wings seen appearing from beyond the margin on either side, reinforces the idea of the illimitable character and united strength of man's mental life, when it has found its relation to the universal life.[4]

[1] Elihu's vision as described by Mr Damon (*vide supra*, note 5, pp. 156*f.*) is here lifted into the Song of Dawn (*vide supra*, note 2, p. 32) by Job's Divine-Human Imagination. The stars of the Reasoner being invaded and possessed by the seraphs of inspiration (*vide* note 4 *infra*).

[2] " F. Z.," *cp.* " Vala," ix. l. 727 ; *cp.* also " M. H. H.," p. 8.

[3] *Vide* Gilchrist, ii. p. 224.

[4] There are two illustrations in " Jerusalem " completely different in design but probably closely similar in conception ; both as compared with the present illustration, and with each other. In each case linked angels form a chain across the design, and in one case the text proves that they symbolise the interlinking thoughts of Love, that unite man with his universe, and give it a spiritual unity, as opposed to the lower unities of materialism, shown below. (" Jm.," pp. 22 and 75, *vide* Appendix D.)

Although the passion and splendour of this design do not depend for their appeal upon our knowing its meaning—for it is, indeed, almost equally great as an illustration of Genesis or Job or Blakean Christianity—it is easy to see why the conception of Love, rising from within but becoming active and multitudinous in relation to its objects, could move Blake to so great a height of joy. Wordsworth, it will be remembered, speaking of the "transcendent peace" which waited on his mathematical studies, says: "mighty is the charm of those abstractions to a mind beset with images and haunted by herself."[1] And Blake's mind, imprisoned by temperament and conviction in its own seething inner world, found its escape, not in the timeless abstractions which for Wordsworth in his youth typified "the one Supreme Existence," but in the practical reality of other souls; of human "particulars," as he himself would have called them. The discovery of the Supreme Existence in our fellow-beings, interpreted by our own being, kindled "peace," for Blake, into rapture.

In a later design we shall see how the final crisis of Job's life is reached when the vision of this truth wins the passionate allegiance of his active Will.

The little angels at the upper corners in the margin are unrolling the thread of truth that leads us out of the labyrinth of this life. For this vision like the dawn is a beginning.

> "I give you the end of a golden string,
> Only wind it into a ball:
> It will lead you in at Heavens gate,
> Built in Jerusalems wall."[2]

The margin below shows the flames and foaming abyss of Time

[1] Prelude, Book vi.

[2] "Jm.," p. 77, ll. 1-4.

and Space [1] in which the worm and the dread serpent roll—cut off by clouds from the spheres that enclose the days of poetic creation, but with access to the region of stars (note the rising flame on the spectator's right reaching up to the fourth day); for the stars are common to both worlds.

[1] "Behind, the sea of time and space roars and follows swiftly. He who keeps not right onwards is lost." Letter to Thomas Butts, 10th Jan. 1802 (Russell, p. 100).

Can any understand the spreadings of the Clouds
the noise of his Tabernacle

Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud
He scatereth the bright cloud also it is turned about by his counsels

Of Behemoth he saith. He is the chief of the ways of God
Of Leviathan he saith. He is King over all the Children of Pride

Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee

W Blake invent & sculpt

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ILLUSTRATION XV

"Rolling the Sea in rocky paths; forming Leviathan
And Behemoth; the War by Sea enormous & the War
By Land astounding: erecting pillars in the deepest Hell,
To reach the heavenly arches:" ("Jm.," p. 91, ll. 38-41).[1]

This design shows us the creation of the outer or natural world, which to Blake seemed but a shadow of the world within.[2] In the foregoing the Deity points with right forefinger towards the stars, while the mortal men below gaze up in rapture. Now he points with left hand down to the regions below man, though included in the mundane belt of clouds. Here are the monstrous forms of the sea- and earth-powers with their animal and vegetable life, terrible in their magnitude and their might, but unillumined by intelligence,

[1] This is the work of Los's Spectre. Los is lord of Time and Space ("Time & Space obey my will," "Mn.," p. 20, l. 17), and works with his Spectre for the redemption of Humanity ("Jm.," p. 8, ll. 39, 40). The Spectre is often defined as the Reasoning power, but really represents the "Natural man" in every aspect ("Man is born a Spectre or Satan," "Jm.," p. 52; *cp.* "The Devil is in us, as far as we are Nature." "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825; Symons, p. 265).

The work of Los's Spectre, then, is of the natural creation in Time and Space (*cp.* last four lines of long passage quoted from the "Milton" in note on pp. 163-5, and note the *reasoner's* vision of the universe) which is created to be destroyed and so separated or cast out (*cp.* note 2, p. 32, and note 1, p. 170). In the passage from which the above lines are quoted, Los destroys the works of the Spectre, until at last he has "completely divided him into a separate space," "Jm.," p. 91, l. 52 (*cp.* "Giving a body to Falshood that it may be cast off for ever," "Jm.," p. 12, l. 13).

Cp. "The ruins of Time build mansions in Eternity." Letter to Hayley, 6th May 1800 (Russell, p. 69).

[2] "In your Imagination of which this World of Mortality is but a Shadow" ("Jm.," p. 71, l. 19).

or the knowledge of "brotherhood." Yet these are the works of the same life-power as we know in ourselves though as yet but half revealed. No human feet are shown by either God or man—for the feet are the earthly aspect of the divine humanity, and here the earthly aspect of the universe is represented by Behemoth and Leviathan themselves. They are the "pillars in the deepest Hell," erected to reach the heavenly arches.

The elemental stars appear in the natural world as well as in the eternal world above the clouds; for they are the link between nature and eternity.[1]

The margin shows again the abysmal deep, and the spiral shells that express in another form the coil of revolving and evolving life. The corners are set with symbols of light and air,[2] the two elements needed to supplement earth and water, and of which the spiritual aspects—love and knowledge[3]—are yet wanting to the perfect creation.[4] Was there ever another artist who could, in a space

[1] "F. Z.," "Vala," ii. ll. 266, 267. *Vide* Illus. xii.

[2] Mr Damon says: "The inverted eagles also suggest that they are the Divine Genius working in the Abyss," and quotes the following interesting passage from the "Four Zoas" ("Vala," ii. ll. 150-153):—

> "While far into the vast unknown the strong-wing'd Eagles bend
> Their venturous flight in Human forms distinct; thro' darkness deep
> They bear the woven draperies: on golden hooks they hang abroad
> The universal curtains." (Damon, p. 233.)

[3] We may find the correspondence of the Zoas with the elements in "F. Z." ("Vala," i. ll. 285-290). Here Los describes the other three Zoas: "Luvah walking upon the winds!" "the Human Brain, where Urizen and all his hosts hang their immortal lamps;" and "this cold expanse where watery Tharmas mourns." Here we have also evidence of the relation of Urizen (light) with the human mind. And Luvah says, "I was Love," in "F. Z." ("Vala," ii. l. 104). Thus we get Light corresponding to mind and Air to love, and we may therefore take the eagles to represent love, the old man intellect, and the two to supplement Leviathan and Behemoth as the water and earth powers. (Los is "in the Earth," "F. Z.," *cp.* "Vala," i. l. 11.)

[4] For the significance of the feet of Behemoth, *vide supra*, p. 18.

no larger than the palm of his hand, produce so grand a picture of the massy earth, ruthless and prolific, bounded by the hungry hissing and inhuman sea. The sense of crude cosmic exuberance planting itself unconquerably upon pristine horror is here wrought enduringly into a jewel of Gothic splendour.

And here we must pause a moment before entering the last and highest phase of Job's vision.

We saw in the earlier part of this work how Blake loved to show two aspects of each scene comparable to the two aspects shown in the "Songs of Innocence and of Experience" (Illus. 2 and 3, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and probably 10 and 11). So long as Job is in the world of Time and Space this alternation of aspects pulses through his life. Even the Eternals experience something like it as a feature of their paradise.[1] And no phase of life can be regarded as permanently blessed until we have experienced its obverse or breakdown and found that blessed too. The Vision of Creation here shown is, so to speak, the obverse of the Morning Stars, the two corresponding in this higher life to Innocence and Experience, to the Lamb and the Tiger in fact.[2]

In the margin, beneath the Sons of God, and the glorious Six days of Creation, we saw the same hungry "sea of Time and Space,"[3] as we have here, showing both illustrations to be, after

[1] "Jm.," p. 38, ll. 17, 18, and "Jm.," p. 98, ll. 35 *ff.*

"... & every Word & every Character
Was Human according to the Expansion or Contraction, the Translucence or
Opakeness of Nervous fibres, such was the variation of Time & Space
Which vary according as the Organs of Perception vary: & they walked
To & fro in Eternity as One Man, reflecting each in each & clearly seen
And seeing; according to fitness & order. ..."

[2] *Vide supra*, note 2, p. 32.

[3] *Vide supra*, note 1, p. 172.

all, aspects of the temporal vision ; one flooded with poetry indeed, but in essence not different from this grim phantasy of man's abysmal origins. " Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee." For this reason Job's spiritual journey is not yet over. He has one more ordeal to face. He must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ and there finally reject error. He can then enter " Paradise and liberty " even in this life.[1]

In the Fourfold Paradise introduced after the Last Judgment of Christ (Illus. 16), he will still experience the pulse of " The Two Contrary States of the Human Soul,"[2] but they will be hurtless and even blessed. The ecstasy of his vision when he prays for his friends and is accepted by the Lord has its obverse when he finds himself obliged on the earthly plane to accept the charity of his relatives. But even this has become for him a state of supreme blessedness through the Vision of Christ.

The poetic rapture, as he sings his " Song of Experience " to his daughters, fades into the light of common day as he stands beneath the oak of mortality in the final dawn. But at last poetry can never leave him, and even on this earth he finds himself still in heaven.[3]

[1] *Vide supra*, Illus. xii., p. 153 *ff*.

[2] *Vide* Title-page " Songs of Innocence and of Experience. Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul."

[3] He has his right foot still uncovered in Illus. 21, as it was in Illus. 20. Whereas when it was uncovered in Illus. 5, in his effort to create " A False Holiness hid within the Center " (" J^{m}.," p. 69, l. 40), the left becomes prominent in the sequel (Illus. 6), and the breakdown is cataclysmic. Similarly his slightly advanced right in Illus. 7 leads to his abysmal despair in Illus. 8, where the left foot is advanced.

Hell is naked before him & Destruction has no covering

Cast them into the Almighty to perfection

Cast them into outer darkness

The Accuser of our Brethren is Cast down
which accused them before our God day & night

Cast down by searching find out God

It is higher than Heaven what canst thou do

It is deeper than Hell what canst thou know

The Prince of this World shall be cast out

Thou hast fulfilled the Judgment of the Wicked

Even the Devils are Subject to Us thro thy Name Jesus said unto them I saw Satan as lightning fall from Heaven

God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise
And God hath chosen the weak things of the World to confound the things that are mighty.

WBlake inv & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs March 8: 1825 by William Blake. No 13 Fountain Court. Strand

ILLUSTRATION XVI

"Forgiveness of sin is only at the judgment-seat of Jesus the Saviour, where the accuser is cast out" ("V. L. J.").

This Illustration introduces us to the fourth and final act. We have seen (in Illus. 1 to 6) Job's destruction through outward things, in Illus. 7 to 11 his still deeper damnation through inward error. Then in Illus. 11 to 15 we saw his escape back into the outward world of men and things to discover therein a new salvation. But he can only attain full liberty in the inward world, and this only after the casting out of error, which Blake symbolises as a Divine Judgment. About this he tells us a great deal in the manuscript essay on his picture of the Last Judgment, from which we learn that "Whenever any individual rejects error and embraces truth a Last Judgment passes upon that individual." And from the same source we learn that after a last judgment it is possible to live in paradise even in the body.[1] In this design everything is on Job's left, even his wife, for the second[2] and last time in the book.[3] This symbolises that his whole life has been "Experienced," including his wife, who, so far as his relation to her was false, is now given a body and cast out with his own false self and his Satanic error.

In the second Illustration we saw the evil Job and wife

[1] *V. supra*, p. 153. [2] *V. supra*, p. 162.

[3] In Illus. 18 she is on the left of Job, but not of the design, because his back is turned.

appearing as shadowy images in Satan's flame. Now we see in Satan's flame these evil selves as they have been bodied forth into a permanent form, making it possible to cast them out for ever with the great Satan himself.[1] Job will never again be tempted to mistake his own personal salvation, or even his own righteousness, for life's true end. And meanwhile his own sufferings have wakened his imaginative life, and begotten in him a tender sympathy for the spiritual labour and sorrow of all creation. For into the light of the divine sun or halo, there enter the many forms of children, representing "the eternal births of intellect from the divine humanity"[2] while the little weeping angels[3] speak of the Pity by which the wars of the world produced by Wrath can alone be healed.[4]

Job's friends narrowly escape the blast that sweeps down the evil ones to destruction.[5] There is something in their souls over which it has power, but they are saved, as we shall see, by the com-

[1] "To be an error, and to be cast out, is a part of God's design." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 195).

Cp. "F. Z." ("Vala," viii. p. 475). "All mortal things made permanent that they may be put off."

[2] "Jesus is surrounded by beams of glory, in which are seen all around Him infants emanating from Him: these represent the eternal births of intellect from the divine humanity." "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 196).

[3] "Every Tear from Every Eye
Becomes a Babe in Eternity:"
"Auguries of Innocence," ll. 67-8 (Sampson, p. 290).

Cp. also "For a Tear is an Intellectual Thing." "The Grey Monk" (Sampson, p. 286).

[4] "They have divided themselves by Wrath, they must be united by Pity" ("J^{m}.," p. 7, ll. 57-8).

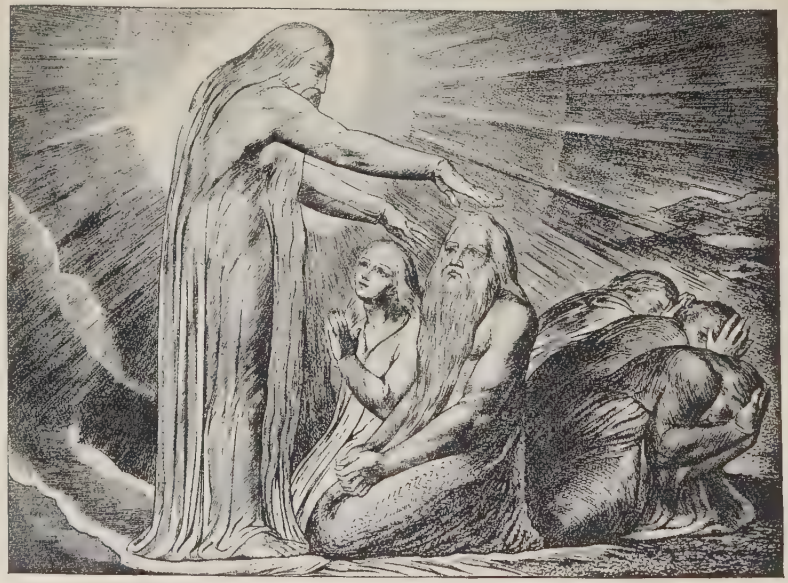
[5] "Hope earnestly that you have escaped the brush of my evil star, which I believe is now for ever fallen into the abyss." Letter to Hayley, 27th Jan. 1804 (Russell, p. 141).

passion of Job's Divine-humanity. For, fortunately, we have not all to go down to the pit's depth, if we can learn from the experience of others.[1]

It should be noticed that the belt of clouds which generally has separated earth from heaven is at last broken through, making a clear passage from one to the other.

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 197, Illus. 18.

He bringeth down to the Grave & bringeth up
we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as He is
When I behold the Heavens the work of thy hands the Moon & Stars which thou hast ordained. then I say What is Man that thou art mindful of him & the Son of Man that thou visitest him



I have heard thee with the hearing of the Ear but now my Eye seeth thee

He that hath seen me hath seen my Father also

I & my Father are One

If you had known me ye would have known my Father also and from henceforth ye know him & have seen him

Believe me that I am in the Father & the Father in me or else believe me for the very works sake

He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father & I will love him & manifest myself unto him

And my Father will love him & we will come unto him & make our abode with him

If a man love me he will keep my words

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings

And the Father shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever

Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father & you in me & I in you

If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father

William Blake

Inv & Sculp

London Published as the Act directs March 2 1823 by William Blake No 3 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION XVII

"He who would see the Divinity must see him in his Children
One first, in friendship & love: then a Divine Family, & in the midst
Jesus will appear" ("Jm.," p. 91, ll. 18-20).

THIS Illustration represents the union or marriage[1] of the two worlds, which becomes possible after a "Last Judgment" or the rejection of error.[2] In Illus. 13 we saw Deity descended below the cloud-belt. Here, in the vision of Christ, Man and his whole world are lifted above it. "God becomes as we are, that we may be as he is."[3] Both illustrations show a cloud-belt in the margin encompassing the whole design which it never quite does elsewhere. Whether Heaven descends to Earth[4] or Earth ascends to Heaven, the two worlds become one and are alike above and below the encircling depths.

It further represents the first unchallenged clockwise ascent. The nightmare God, of Nature (Illus. 11), showed a clockwise descent, the God of the Whirlwind showed both ascent and descent

[1] "The Last Judgment," Blake says in the concluding sentence of his "Vision of the Last Judgment," "is seen by the eye of every one according to the situation he holds." In the "Marriage" this is expressed characteristically thus: "It indeed appear'd to Reason as if Desire was cast out, but the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, and formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss" ("M. H. H.," pp. 5 and 6).

[2] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 196, etc.).

[3] "N. N. R." (E. Y., iii.).

[4] "God is in the lowest effects as well as in the highest causes, for he is become a worm that he may nourish the weak. For let it be remembered that creation is God des[c]ending according to the weakness of man." "Lav.," 630 (*cp.* Ellis, 620, p. 149.)

(Illus. 13), but this Deity rises on the spectator's left out of the abyss, and the spirits of Job and his wife ascend with it. Only to the friends is this beneficent being a presence of Judgment, bowing them down on the spectator's right. Though their spiritual outlook is away from Deity, they cannot escape the force of Creation's redeeming current, which is for them downwards. But there is a still stranger thought of Blake's shown here. We have already said (in the Introduction) that the whole work could be regarded as an attempt to show Job's good as evil, his God as Satan, and his evil as good, his Satan as the Redeemer. In the nightmare he found that all his righteousness was worship of Selfhood, Satan, and here we find that the current of creation, hitherto mainly represented by Satan and his bitter toll of disaster and humiliation, is ultimately a purging and uplifting power leading us through the bitterness of necessary Experience to a condition of secure beatitude. The idea explains such strange utterances as that in "Jerusalem": "Come Lord Jesus take on thee the Satanic Body of Holiness."[1] And with the appearance of Christ we are to pass into a higher heaven. Hitherto we have been in the Earthly Paradise of Blake's system. "Beulah a Soft Moony Universe, feminine, lovely,"[2] but now we are to pass into Jerusalem. In this finale the centre of interest will be always in something that takes place in Job's soul; forgiveness, acceptance of help, artistic conception, adoration and thanksgiving, and not, as before, in the Stars, in the Whirlwind, in the Sun, Moon, Earth and Heaven, or in the elemental forms of Sea and Land. For Jesus breaks through this outer Universe and wakes the inward heaven in Job's soul.

[1] "Jm.," p. 90, l. 38. *Cp.* "M. H. H.," pp. 5, 6, and *supra*, pp. 47, 50, etc.
[2] "F. Z." *Cp.* "Vala," i. l. 204.

" But Jesus breaking thro' the Central Zones of Death & Hell
Opens Eternity in Time & Space; triumphant in Mercy." [1]

The winged female figure in the margin, opening the Scriptures descriptive of the Logos, we may take to be Jerusalem, Bride of the Lamb,[2] symbol of a spiritual condition in Man which we shall find set forth in the following Illustration. God has hitherto always been seen in the image of Job (or, in the case of Eliphaz's vision, of Eliphaz), but in this higher vision he appears as the soul of the whole race and the Universe, the universal Divine-Humanity.

" As One Man all the Universal Family: and that One Man
We call Jesus the Christ: and he in us, and we in him,
Live in perfect harmony in Eden the land of life,
Giving, recieving, and forgiving each others' trespasses." [3]

The representation of Jehovah in the likeness of Job below the clouds (in Illus. 13), and Christ the Divine-Humanity above them, embodies a profound conception. For, remembering that " What is Above is Within," [4] we see that Blake says in effect that we may scan the vast outside Universe in vain for something higher than our own highest, and in nature God is still in our own likeness. But the Deity we find within is something that at last transcends ourselves.[5] This is the great paradox of the " Divine-Humanity," the core of Blake's faith, and before following, in the remaining illustrations, his conceptions of the Fourfold Paradise, we will

[1] " Jm.," p. 75, ll. 21, 22.
[2] " Jm.," p. 27, poem and note on " Jerusalem " *infra* p. 191.
[3] " Jm.," p. 38, ll. 19 *ff.* *Cp. ib.*, p. 93, ll. 3-6.
[4] " Jm.," p. 71, l. 6.
[5] *Cp.* " There is an Outside spread Without & an Outside spread Within
Beyond the Outline of Identity both ways, which meet in One."
(" Jm.," p. 18, ll. 2, 3.)

pause to consider a subject without which no complete understanding of Blake is possible.

(Some readers may prefer to omit this section till the remaining designs have been examined.)

Of Jesus he said, " *He is the only God*," but added, " and so am I and so are you." [1] And although the general purport of this characteristic saying is clear enough, its lucidity and significance will be greatly increased by a knowledge of his distinction between " Identity " and " Essence " ; a distinction which it is worth while to be at the pains to understand.

Each man has his own distinct and eternal Identity, which is not the same as any other, and can never be altered or destroyed or lost in something else. " Individual Identities never change nor cease." [2]

But while constantly insisting on the permanence of "identities," Blake believes that all men (and things) are One in " essence," or, as we might say, in their ultimate nature or character. " One and the same Identity," says Swedenborg, " is not communicable," " but one & the same Essence is," [3] adds Blake.

Now it is this essence, or ultimate human character, which he calls God, or the true Man,[4] and it is possible to view the Universe either as the one Essence (God) or as many Identities (men and things).

> " . . . contracting our infinite senses
> We behold multitude : or expanding ; we behold as one." [5]

[1] " H. C. R. Diary," 10th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 255). Italics H. C. R.'s.
[2] " M[n].," p. 32*, l. 23 (Extra page). *Cp.* " Identities, or Things, are Neither Cause nor Effect, They are Eternal." " Rey.," vi. (Ellis, p. 390).
[3] " Swed.," p. 24.
[4] " A. R. O." Principle 1st and 7th (Keynes, *cp.* Sampson, 1913, p. 427).
[5] " J[m].," p. 38, ll. 17-18.

When we look at it as essence it is God and nothing else. "Creation is God des[c]ending according to the weakness of man, for our Lord is the word of God, & everything on earth is the word of God, & in its essence is God." [1] But when on the other hand we are thinking of identities, God is to be conceived as existing only in these. "God only Acts & Is, in existing beings or Men." [2] "The worship of God is, Honouring his gifts in other men . . . for there is no other God." [3] "The Infinite alone resides in Definite & Determinate Identity." [4] Yet the relation of the identities and their essence is clear enough, and is the same as that between various thoughts and a single emotion from which they spring. "From Essence proceeds Identity, & from one Essence may proceed many Identities, as from one Affection may proceed many thoughts." [5] So every man and thing is due to the same vital essence, as many thoughts may be due to one affection. To complete the parallel we have only to add, what Blake perhaps intended to imply, that the affection must be present in *some* thought to exist at all—for, as we have seen, he constantly says that God, the unity, has no existence except in some man; Jesus, or you, or me.

That this is in substance the outline of Blake's theological system, there can be little or no doubt. Though principally gathered from earlier philosophic writings, it entirely accords with

[1] "Lav.," p. 630 (*cp.* Ellis, 620, p. 149).
[2] "M. H. H.," p. 16.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 22 *f.*; *cp.* "J[m].," p. 91, ll. 7-10.
[4] "J[m].," p. 55, l. 64. *Cp.* "But General Forms have their vitality in Particulars: & every Particular is a Man:" ("J[m].," p. 91, ll. 29-30).
[5] "Swed.," p. 24. The remark, "From Essence proceeds Identity," means, of course, more than that men are made by God. It means that the quality of *Identity* in a man—that which makes him *himself* and no one else—*is* his essence, God.

similar expressions in his "Jerusalem," and it explains what he meant in his last years when (as Crabb Robinson says) "he denied that God has any power," [1] and declared that the language of the Bible as to God's omnipotence was "poetical or allegorical." [2]

But if the Essence, God, does not exist as a separate personality, apart from human identities, what does Blake mean when he talks of the "Father"; of "the Eternal Mercy"; of the ordering of the "Divine Hand"; and so forth?

In the first place, it must be remembered that he freely personifies all his thoughts, "for it is impossible to think without images of somewhat on earth." [3] In the next place, even when he uses expressions which seem to refer to the Creator, he is probably really thinking of the Eternal Christ, the typical (though with Blake, not the only) embodiment of the Divine Essence.

But even so, there are passages which seem at first difficult to reconcile with his system. In certain places he seems to speak of God as presiding over, and guiding, the evolutions of Nature, and in others of Him as sharing the suffering of His creatures. How can an essence, we ask ourselves, which only exists in individuals and has no omnipotence, or even power, be conceived as watching over, suffering in, and guiding the whole?

While freely admitting that the attempt to read philosophic consistency into a poet may sometimes be carried too far, I cannot but think that in this case it is amply justified by the result.

In the first place, outward nature, though it is for Blake essentially "the work of the Devil," [4] has never been in any part

[1] "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 265).
[2] *Ibid.*, 17th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 263).
[3] "Lav." (final note), (Ellis, p. 151).
[4] "H. C. R. Diary," 24th Dec. 1825 (Symons, p. 265).

wholly without the active spirit of love, and life, working as a blind and sleeping force, perhaps, but nevertheless working, and always towards the light. However overlaid and defaced, the true " essence " is always *there*, wherever existence comes. " God is within & without ; he is even in the depths of Hell." [1] And the following passage from the " Four Zoas " is doubtless a description of how the vital essence is never wholly obliterated from the evolutions of nature.

" The ever pitying one who seeth all things, saw his fall,
And in the dark vacuity created a bosom of clay.
When wearied, dead, he fell, his limbs reposd in the bosom of slime.
As the seed falls from the sowers hand, so Urizen fell ; & death
Shut up his powers in oblivion : then as the seed shoots forth
In pain & sorrow, So the slimy bed his limbs renewd.
At first an infant weakness : periods passd, he gatherd strength,

. . . . . .

Endless had been his travel, but the Divine hand him led.
For infinite the distance & obscurd by Combustions dire,
By rocky masses frowning in the abysses revolving erratic,
Round Lakes of fire in the dark deep." [2]

This is clearly a description of what we should nowadays call the process of " evolution " from rock and fire to rational being. But is the " ever pitying one," and is the " Divine hand " something *within* the process or outside ? And when he says in " Jerusalem " :

" For not one sparrow can suffer & the whole Universe not suffer also,
In all its Regions, & its Father & Saviour not pity and weep " [3]

does he conceive the " Father & Saviour " as in any sense distinct from the " Universe " ? Only, I think, in the sense that he belongs to the school of thought that conceives the " essence "

[1] " Jm.," p. 12, l. 15.
[2] " F. Z." (*cp.* " Vala," vi. ll. 154-176).
[3] " Jm.," p. 25, ll. 8, 9.

every one in their own identity." [1] By using the word benevolence Blake distinguishes between the love of self-surrender and the love of self-seeking.[2]

Before passing to the next design, one further Illustration, though not drawn immediately from Blake himself, may help to elucidate this great conception of the relations of the Essence and Identities. Certain pinnacles of art, we all feel, have a mysterious kinship and even oneness, rendered only the more impressive by their exterior remoteness. Dante's final vision of the Divine Light, Beethoven's last Sonata,[3] Blake's Song of the Morning Stars [4]—are creations not only of different arts and different masters, but extraordinarily different in the ideas they treat, in mastery of technique and in methods of approach. Yet each in turn seems gifted with power to lift the mind into the same region of spiritual light, each seems the vehicle of the same supreme aspiration and fulfilment, each in short seems the utterance of the same final human genius, the same ultimately divine essence.

And though this essence only "is" when realised in some actual "vision," its mysterious presence makes the vehicle transcend the limitations of all art and become something more universal than either pictures or poetry or even music itself.

But Blake's "God" is the essence not of human visions or

[1] "Jm.," p. 43, ll. 19-23.

[2] *Cp.* "The Clod and the Pebble," "S. E.," and "Jm.," p. 33, l. 52, and context. Also "Affection or Love becomes a State, when divided from Imagination" ("Mn.," p. 32*, l. 33, extra page).

"Without Forgiveness of Sin Love is Itself Eternal Death."
("Jm.," p. 64, l. 24).

[3] Opus 111.

[4] Illus. 14. A suggestive comparison between the Choral Symphony and Blake's 14th Job illustration will be found in the study of his art, by Irene Langridge. ("William Blake," Geo. Bell & Sons, p. 155.)

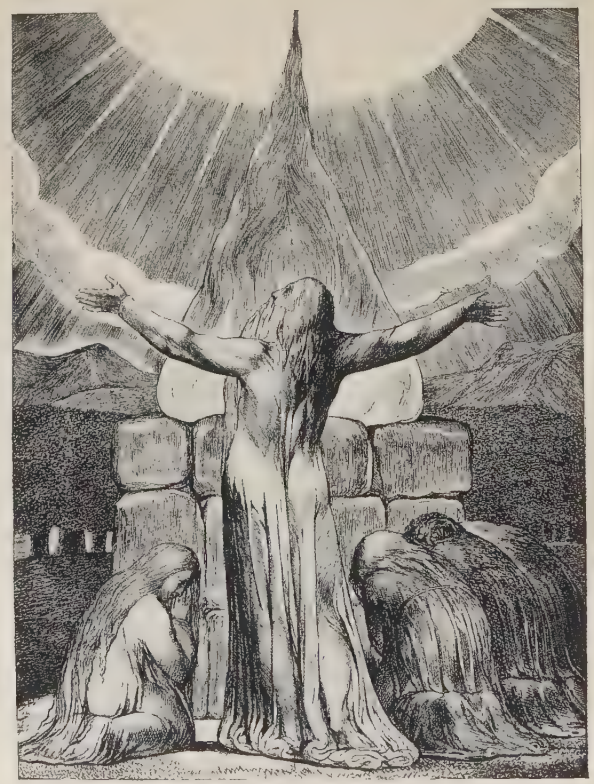
creations, but of human beings themselves. You cannot indeed have the essence of Man without men. But since the essence is itself love or imagination, the man becomes something immeasurably greater than himself in proportion to his realisation of himself. Every human identity, while always freely and independently active, is essentially one with all others as it becomes more perfect. This is Job's vision of Christ, which we are to see in the following designs becoming not only a Vision, but a life.[1]

NOTE ON JERUSALEM

The identity of the winged figure in the margin of this design with " Jerusalem " only occurred to me while the first edition was in the press. The points to be noted are—(*a*) Blake's angels, like those of the mediæval masters, have generally feminine features but men's bodies, and are probably never definitely female as this figure is, even when, like those in Illus. 5, they are somewhat effeminate. The figure therefore requires explanation, and (*b*) the particular scriptures she opens to us are all from the Fourth Gospel, concerning the Father in Christ, and are therefore appropriately introduced by the Bride of the Lamb (*vide* " J^m^.," p. 27, etc.).

[1] For the further treatment of this subject, *vide* Appendix E on Blake's " Pluralism," pp. 223 *ff*.

Also the Lord accepted Job



And my Servant Job shall pray for you

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his Friends

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ILLUSTRATION XVIII

"This is Jerusalem in every Man
A Tent & Tabernacle of Mutual Forgiveness. . . ." ("Jm," p. 54, ll. 3, 4.)

"THE Lord also accepted Job . . . when he prayed for his friends." [1] Forgiveness, according to Blake, is the entrance to Paradise; [2] the Divine life becoming reconciled to our earthly lives in so far only as these are reconciled to one another.[3] To feel resentment or anger against a wrong-doer, is to forget that he himself is the greatest sufferer, and, therefore, the most needing our compassion.[4] This design accordingly represents the opening

[1] Job xlii. 9, 10.

[2] Prologue to the small engraved pamphlet, "For the Sexes, The Gates of Paradise." Sampson, p. 372.

"Mutual Forgiveness of each Vice
Such are the Gates of Paradise."

Cp. "The Glory of Christianity is, To Conquer by Forgiveness."
("Jm.," p. 52; *cp. Ibid.*, p. 64, l. 24, etc.)

[3] ". . . If you Forgive one-another so shall Jehovah Forgive You:
That He Himself may Dwell among You."
("Jm.," p. 61, ll. 25, 26.)

[4] "If I should dare to lay my finger on a grain of sand
In way of vengeance: I punish the already punishd: O whom
Should I pity if I pity not the sinner who is gone astray:"
("Jm.," p. 31, ll. 33-35.)

Cp. "Go therefore cast out devils in Christs name,
Heal thou the sick of spiritual disease.
Pity the evil, for thou art not sent
To smite with terror & with punishments

scene of the Fourfold Paradise we have now entered. But Paradise is for Blake inclusion, not exclusion. And, accordingly, we see the flame that once swathed Satan breaking the cloud-belt and soaring to the heart of the Sun that once irradiated God.[1] In the "Last Judgment" design (Illus. 16), Satan and the Satanic Job and wife were shown falling *out* of their enveloping flame, not *with* it, like Satan in Illus. 5. The flame itself rises as it opens below to cast its evil burden into the greedy abyss of annihilation. And here we probably have the same flame representing the regenerate human will, drawn irresistibly up from its stony altar into the "Bosom of God, the Human Imagination."[2]

For the Will is, according to Blake, primarily "evil" or "hell," being, as he believes, essentially selfish.[3] But where it freely submits itself to the service of the indwelling Poetic Genius or Divine-Humanity, and recognises that this is the source of all its good, "Good & Evil are here both Good, & the two contraries Married."[4]

> Those that are sick, like to the Pharisees
> Crucifying & encompas[s]ing sea & land
> For proselytes to tyranny & wrath,
> But to the Publicans & Harlots go;
> Teach them True Happiness, but let no curse
> Go forth out of thy mouth to blight their peace.
> For Hell is opend to Heaven; thine eyes beheld
> The dungeons burst & the Prisoners set free." ("Jm.," p. 77, poem.)

[1] "And there to Eternity aspire
The Selfhood in a flame of fire;"
(Unfinished verse in Rossetti MS., Sampson, 1913, p. 394).

[2] "Jm.," p. 5, l. 20.

[3] "There can be no Good Will, Will is always Evil . . . to others." (These words appear clearly amidst much that is illegible on the fly-leaf of Blake's copy of Swedenborg's "Angelic Wisdom" in the British Museum.)

[4] "Swed.," p. 56 (misquoted by Ellis, "God and evil are here both good, etc.," Ellis, p. 110).

The idea of the good and evil aspects working together and being reconciled, is, of

In this Paradise we shall no longer see the spiritual world in personal forms. Not Satan only but God himself has disappeared, and though the angels haunt the margins they appear no more in the designs. Earth itself soars into heaven and Job, in the moment of supreme self-surrender, becomes himself the image of his own "Humanity-Divine." "God only Acts and Is in existing beings." But the divine sun, though it no longer appears as the halo of a personal Deity, still shows itself in symbolic correspondence with the earthly man. Job advances towards the altar with his head turned to his left and his left foot forward (as the conspicuous thrust back of his right foot shows), but the sun is more resplendent on its right. Three great rays are shown issuing from its disc where the left foot would be shown if Deity in personal form appeared, and where the right foot would be there are four. In the engravings, though scarcely in reproductions, this feature is emphasised by certain hair-strokes on the sun itself. Two arrows can be discovered on the right side and one on the left. More obvious is the effect on earth. On one side we see a glow over the horizon behind the hills and light shines between the trunks of the trees in the middle distance, while, on the other side, the horizon is dark and the trees shut out the light. Job's wife, too, is in the light while the friends on the other side are in the shade.

But this correspondence between Job and the Deity is for the first time a unison, for by representing Job with his back to the spectator (one of Blake's splendid afterthoughts) [1] his left becomes

course, the theme of the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell," and occurs in "Jm.," p. 8, ll. 39-40, and 27, v. 19 and 83, ll. 78, 79.

[1] Gilchrist, ii. p. 224. This correspondence of Job and Jehovah here depicted opens a deeply-interesting chapter in Blake's symbolism, which, however, can only be cursorily touched on. It has been suggested that his mythic name "Los," is the reverse

the same as the divine right. To this outward and visible sign there is inward and spiritual meaning. There was a time when Job tried to be God to the beggar. Then the gift of a material thing was conceived by him as a spiritual act. Now he is to offer a supreme spiritual gift in selfless humility as an earthly man. Though he has been vindicated and uplifted by incarnate Deity itself he is not to indulge even a momentary sense of triumph or satisfaction at the rebuff of his friends, but is to fully share with them the truth he has bought so dearly and in their despite. And it is in the essence of this gift that it shall be given not as a divine but as a humble human act. "Friend I have been wrong," we may picture him as saying, "my righteousness was vanity, do you too save your lives by losing them." And in that moment God and Job are no longer two but one. Job is henceforth himself the Divine Image, and the Heavenly light is his own state of mind become visible,

> "In Great Eternity every particular Form gives forth or Emanates
> Its own peculiar Light, & the Form is the Divine Vision
> And the Light is his Garment. This is Jerusalem in every Man
> A Tent & Tabernacle of Mutual Forgiveness" ("J^m.," p. 54, ll. 1-4).[1]

of Sol (Russell, p. 110 note), and in a poem in a letter to Thos. Butts (22nd Nov. 1802, Russell, p. 111), he says: "'Twas outward a Sun, inward Los in his might." As all his engraved works had to be written and cut on the plate reversed, it seems possible that he sometimes conceived himself as *within* the page facing the spectator or reader, and thus came to look upon reversed writing as more inward, which would explain his choosing the word "Los" as the name of his most important mythic personage. In "Jerusalem" and "Milton," several important mottoes, written across the designs, are in reversed writing, and he may have conceived Hebrew as having a special sanctity in connection with its being written right to left. *Vide supra*, p. 87. *Vide* also Appendix A.

[1] *Cp.* "Man is adjoined to Man by his Emanative portion:
Who is Jerusalem in every individual Man . . .
. . . . . .
O search and see: turn your eyes inward: open O thou World
Of Love & Harmony in Man: expand thy ever lovely Gates."
("J^m.," p. 44, ll. 38-42.)

The idea of the redemptive power of selfless humility is repeated in the position of Job's wife, who exchanges her usual place upon Job's right for his left, and thereby finds herself on the Divine right. Her cramped and diminished figure is no doubt expressive of extreme humility, and is one of Blake's less fortunate attempts to express emotions in his attitudes.

In this spirit of self-offering Blake shows his own palette and brushes in the margin, and the long unfolding scroll of his writings. He here offers up the labours of his brush and pen to the Poetic Genius [1] on behalf of a world that mistook his gold for dross, in the prayer that there may be some who shall thereby be spared the bitterness of his own descent into the pit. For though genius makes its own way through the darkness,[2] there has always been a majority of mankind, " who, though willing, were too weak to reject error without the assistance and countenance of those already in the truth : for a man can only reject error by the advice of a friend, or by the immediate inspiration of God." [3]

The Angels in the margin show, though less distinctly, the same motion as those on the title-page. The open Scriptures beneath speak of forgiveness [4] as leading to the perfection of God, who " maketh his Sun to shine on the Evil & the Good."

[1] *Cp.* " Christianity is Art " (" Laocoon "), and
" The Glory of Christianity is, To Conquer by Forgiveness." (" Jm.," p. 52.)

[2] *Cp.* " Improve[me]nt makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without Improvement are roads of genius." (" M. H. H.," p. 10.)

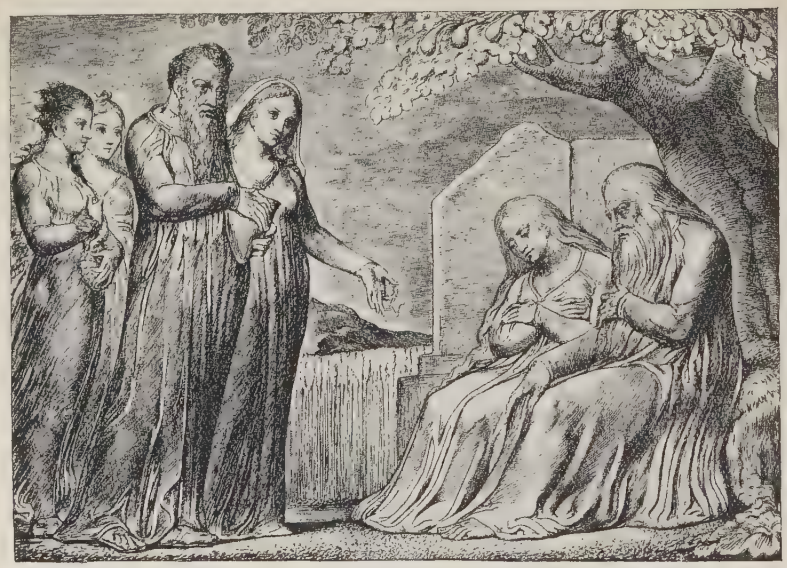
[3] " V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 197).

[4] Another conception of the consummation of Forgiveness, in some ways complementary, will be found *infra*, p. 217. Note on Blake's Magdalen.

The Lord maketh Poor & maketh Rich

He bringeth Low & Lifteth Up

who provideth for the
Raven his Food
When his young ones cry unto God



Every one also gave him a piece of Money

Who remembered us in our low estate
For his Mercy endureth for ever

London Published as the Act directs March 2. 1823 by William Blake N 3 Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION XIX

"All Things Common" ("Laocoon").

In this Illustration we see Job and his wife restored to a milder but radiant prosperity. The sheep and storehouses are gone, but their fields flow with corn and they sit beneath their own fig tree. The margin shows palm trees, symbolical of the flourishing of the righteous (the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree), and below lilies and roses are symbolical perhaps of male and female bounty respectively.[1] But "there is suffering in Heaven," [2] and Blake's "Paradise" holds its own Purgatory. The scene, like that in Illus. 18, represents part of Heaven's purgatorial gate, the last ordeal of the earthly man. For Job must learn to live in selfless love and forgiveness not only towards those he can benefit but even towards those who can benefit him. The Illustration is the counterpart of Illus. 5. There Job gave charity; here he has to learn to receive it.[3] In Illus. 5 the beggar shows both feet (right

[1] Mr Damon says they are "the roses and lilies of material and spiritual beauty," and refers to the 18th plate of "Jerusalem," where the two figures respectively crowned with Roses and Lilies, represent Vala and Jerusalem—a delightful observation (Damon, p. 235).

[2] Crabb Robinson (Symons, p. 259) says of Blake: "Tho' he spoke of his happiness, he spoke of past sufferings, and of sufferings as necessary. There is suffering in Heaven, for where there is the capacity of enjoyment there is the capacity of pain" (10th Dec. 1825). *Cp.* "H. C. R. Rem." (Symons, p. 291).

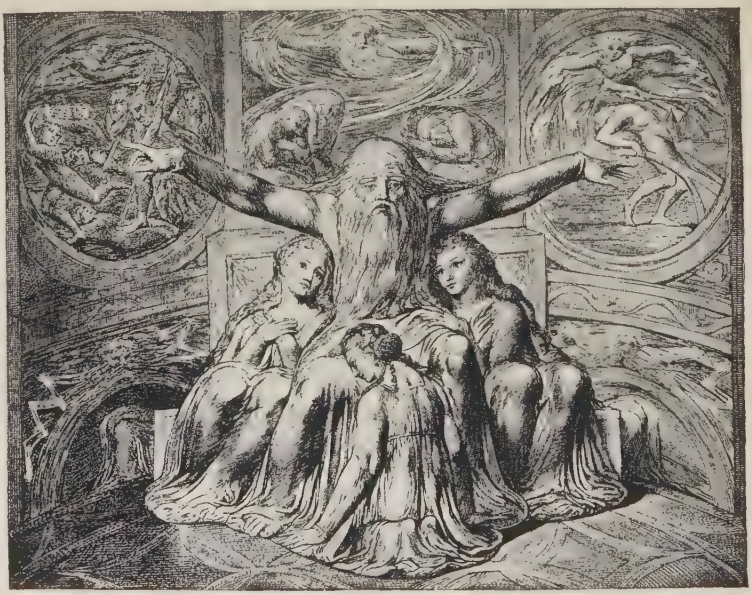
[3] "I ordered of him to-day a copy of his songs for 5 guineas—My manner of receiving his mention of price pleased him—He spoke of his horror of money and of

slightly more advanced) and Job the right only; here the benefactor shows both feet (left more advanced) and Job the left only. Wherever we get two complementary beings, man and wife or God and man, the more eternal of the two is likely to be shown with both feet, the less eternal with one, and where that one is the left foot, the relation is the true one. In Illus. 5 it is the beggar that shows both feet on earth and Jehovah in heaven, and indeed the wonderful light on the beggar's head and face suggests that Blake may have intended him to be the representation of God on earth and that Job's action, spiritually seen, is not, as he supposes, a gift to a brother man, but all unconsciously to his own spiritual self; and that his motive even more than the relief of a brother is, by denying the bread to his body, to increase the stature of his soul. At all events the present Illustration represents an act of pure and unselfish charity, and its depiction as a scene in which his hero is the humble recipient and not the donor shows us Blake at his most searching. One is reminded inevitably of his own relation to Linnell, and the picture concentrates the whole story into a tender and passionate acknowledgment to his patron. We may, perhaps, read a still deeper meaning into it. The need of the earthly man and wife is a thing that passes. Both the want and its relief are long since dead. But the love and insight which understands the need and knows how to relieve it with tact and bounty is an eternal feature of social man. For this act is not an isolated deed of a wealthy individual, it is a sweet rush of manly and womanly affection, giving enthusiastically from its own superfluity and from the heart. The heart-shaped purse and the waving

turning pale when it was offered him—and this was certainly unfeigned." "H. C. R. Rem.," 19th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 303); *cp.* "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 268).

cornfield are apt and obvious symbols, and the gift by the benefactor's wife, not of money but of a jewel, was a point in the Scriptural story which Blake seized as showing that the beneficence was not the grudging relief of bleak necessity, but an affectionate sharing even of superfluities.

How precious are thy thoughts
unto me O God
how great is the sum of them



There were not found Women fair as the Daughters of Job
in all the Land & their Father gave them Inheritance
among their Brethren

If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there
If I make my bed in Hell behold Thou
art there

London Published as the Act directs March 8. 1825 by William Blake N. 3 Fountain Court Strand.

ILLUSTRATION XX

"To speak to future generations by a sublime allegory" (Letter to Thos. Butts, 6th July 1803).

With the exception of the third Illustration this is the only interior in the series. That was the inside of Job's "house," the inner meaning of his "patriarchal family." And this may be taken as the inside of his Gothic Church, representative of true Art.[1] Here Job's Art is the creation of a great Song of Experience[2] whose episodes are sculptured in three panels on the walls,[3] and

[1] "V. L. J." (Gilchrist, ii. p. 192). *Cp.* "Christianity is Art," "A Poet, a Painter, a Musician, an Architect, the Man Or Woman who is not one of these is not a Christian." These are from the "Laocoon." But in "Jerusalem" (p. 77) he includes what he calls "Science" and all intellectual pursuits: "Let every Christian, as much as is in him lies, engage himself openly & publicly before all the World in some Mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem."

[2] In a pencil note on the fly-leaf of Blake's copy of Swedenborg's "Angelic Wisdom" a few words stand out clear amidst general obliteration. Amongst these are the words "Suffering and Distress, *i.e.* Experience"—the first part of the sentence probably being "Understanding (is in no way natural to) Man it is acquired by means of Suffering and Distress, *i.e.* Experience." *Cp.* also the quotation from the "Four Zoas," *supra*, p. 42 (*cp.* "Vala," ii. ll. 397-418).

[3] "All things acted on Earth are seen in the bright Sculptures of
Los's Halls & every Age renews its powers from these Works
With every pathetic story possible to happen from Hate or
Wayward Love & every sorrow & distress is carved here
Every Affinity of Parents, Marriages & Friendships are here
In all their various combinations wrought with wondrous Art
All that can happen to Man in his pilgrimage of seventy years."
("Jm.," p. 16, ll. 61-67.)

in which he tells the tale of his sufferings to the beings he most tenderly loves in the world. It will be remembered that in the Satanic destruction of the sons the wives and not the daughters appeared,[1] and it is perhaps allowable to imagine that these daughters of Job are conceived by Blake as his original daughters brought back to spiritual life by his song. And may not the sleeping forms in the vaults behind be his sons awaiting the call ? [2] "By words," says Wordsworth in a passage Blake read and re-read, "which speak of nothing more than what we *are*, would I arouse the sensual from their sleep of Death and win the vacant and the vain to noble raptures." [3] And if the present Illustration shows us the spoken

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 99.

[2] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 96, ll. 38, 39, where Albion's Son & Daughters awake from their sleep.

[3] "H. C. R. Diary," 18th Feb. 1826 (Symons, p. 266); but *cp.* the Reminiscences (p. 298), where an obviously different MS. copy is referred to. *Cp.* also reference to a copy in H. C. R.'s Letter to D. Wordsworth (Symons, p. 275). In spite of his admiration for the lines, Blake could not endure the passage :—

> "For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
> Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
> To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
> All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
> That ever was put forth in personal form ;
> Jehovah, with his thunder, and the choir
> Of shouting angels, and the empyreal thrones,
> I pass them, unalarm'd."

"What does he mean by 'the worlds to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil,' and who is he that shall 'pass Jehovah unalarmed ?'" Crabb Robinson's letter to Dorothy Wordsworth (Symons, p. 275).

Although it was certainly unreasonable, it is easy to understand Blake's objection to these passages. For Blake had chosen the very images and symbols which Wordsworth here rejects, to express what Wordsworth had to say. Blake's Jehovah and his choir of shouting angels (Illus. 14 of this book) is Wordsworth's "discerning intellect of man when wedded to this goodly universe in love and holy passion . . . and the creation (by no lower name can it be called) which they with blended might accomplish."

word, the next is to show us the risen family lifting in choral symphony their " noble raptures " up to Heaven.

The panel on Job's right tells of the dire deeds of man against man, that on his left of the disasters Nature inflicts, both inspired by Satan. In the centre we see the whirlwind that passes over the heads of Job's friends, but pours its full blast upon himself and his wife, and yet in so doing reveals to them the present Deity.[1]

The exaggeration of some of the limbs in this design, especially the left arm of the daughter kneeling before Job, may be an attempt to emphasise the active nature of the " New Church," but it is perhaps better considered as one of the many instances in which Blake sacrifices his drawing to his design. The beauty of the silhouette is strikingly brought out by holding the design upside down and half closing the eyes. We then see the need of a prominent feature in the forefront of the group to bring together the converging series of massive lower limbs, and it becomes easier to forgive the distortion of the figure.

Job's outspread hands recall the attitude of the indwelling Creator in Illus. 14, and it is not impossible that the daughters represent the sun, the moon and the earth, as symbolically used in that design beneath the Deity's right hand, left hand and feet respectively. This would further account for the extreme solidity of the middle daughter, whose head is turned to the left.[2]

[1] Gilchrist tells a beautiful story (i. p. 353) of his saying to a lovely child of wealthy parents : " May God make this world to you, my child, as beautiful as it has been to me ! " *Cf.* poem written at the end of his MS. book, and, therefore, probably, towards the end of his life (Sampson, p. 238). " I rose up at the dawn of day," etc. (extract quoted *supra*, page 42).

[2] There is a design (Russell " Engravings," p. 91) of Job in prosperity attended by figures representing " Poetry, Painting and Music." " The three powers in man of conversing with Paradise which the Flood did not sweep away " (" V. L. J.," Gilchrist, ii. p. 191). But I think myself that these are real women and that Blake had returned

In the margin, the vines and grapes probably symbolise Christ and Christian joy, and the musical instruments, Art. The cloud-belt for the only time in the book has entirely disappeared, for there is no longer separation between Man and God.

NOTE

Mr Damon makes a delightful observation, which had escaped me, as to the meaning of the floor design. "This floor consists of a great circle tessellated with many smaller interlacing circles. No doubt this represents the communion of the heaven of art; the small circles representing the individuals entering each other's bosoms (the inscribed portions being significantly four-sided), all of them being contained in one great circle, who is the One Man, Jesus himself" (Damon, p. 236). *Cp.* the beautiful design in the text of p. 75 of "Jerusalem" (*vide supra*, p. 170, n. 5), in which intersecting circles around angels form a zone across the page. It is interesting also, in connection with Mr Damon's observation, to note that the panels right and left are circles and the central panel four-sided.

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to the original Job story from a not very successful attempt to allegorise them. This is not to deny allegory altogether in the design, but merely to point out that here the literal has become the uppermost for Blake and is felt as the most spiritual.

Great & Marvellous are thy Works
Lord God Almighty

Just & True are thy Ways
O thou King of Saints

So the Lord blefsed the latter end of Job
more than the beginning

After this Job lived
an hundred & forty years
& saw his Sons & his
Sons Sons

even four Generations
So Job died
being old
& full of days

In burnt Offerings for Sin
thou hast had no Pleasure

W Blake inv & sculp

London Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by William Blake Fountain Court Strand

ILLUSTRATION XXI

"For lo! the Night of Death is past and the Eternal Day
Appears upon our Hills: Awake Jerusalem" ("Jm.," p. 97, ll. 3, 4).

And here the story ends. Job is seen once more with his family beneath the patriarchal oak as in the first Illustration, but, as that was evening, this is dawn. The long night is over, and the symphony of praise raised to heaven by Job's family mingles with the song of the morning stars, while the rising sun engulfs their light.

The marginal design is identical with that in the first Illustration with one significant alteration, the changed places of the bullock and the ram. The texts are new, but from the one on the altar in the first Illustration we get the clue to the meaning of the musical instruments. There the patriarchal parents read from the written word, the letter that killeth, while the symbols of prophetic harmony hung silent upon the tree above. Here the whole family rise and take down the instruments of the spirit that giveth life.

Corresponding with the change in the position of the sun, which is now on Job's left, is the change in the position of the bull and ram, and perhaps the fact that in the text above the design God's *works* are celebrated on the right side, his *ways* on the left; that is to say we now have the material things on the patriarch's right and the spiritual things (such as the sun) on his left. If this observation is correct it is probably expressive of a conception

of profound beauty and significance. We may take it as almost certain that the sheep with the crook on the right symbolises the pastoral age or "Innocence," and the bullock consequently "Experience." Comparing this finale with the opening we therefore find this change. Job's innocence or happiness was then founded upon the material things of life, his barns and storehouses, in short, his patriarchal wealth. Experience, sorrow, distress, on the other hand, were things known to him only in imagination, dread possibilities, and in this sense spiritual realities, but never realised earthly facts. But we have to learn that innocence is not innocence, nor is happiness true happiness, till it is secured against the assaults of fortune by being founded in the poetic and imaginative life. Whereas experience is not experience till it has been actually endured and embodied in the flesh. And so the spiritual life must come to earth, where its infernal aspect will become known and rejected, its divine side will become inseparably ourselves; while the life of earth, with all its fair and tender side, and all its tragedy, shall be made beautiful and eternal in art and song. The moral of the whole being that the divine life, life in the imagination, must be brought to earth, in order that earth may be lifted to it. "God becomes as we are that we may be as He is." [1]

One other piece of symbolism confirms this reading. In the first Illustration Job's sun is brighter on its left side. There is even a slight shadow on its right, and its rays carry across the design behind the tree, to shine on his hills and barns on the left. Even his spiritual life had a material bias. Here, on the other

[1] Blake never forgets that the body is holy. *Cp.* "All Life is Holy," "Lav.," 299 (Ellis, p. 133), with "Energy is the only life and is from the Body" ("M. H. H.," p. 4). *Vide* also *supra*, Illus. xii.

hand, his sun, though on his left, is more radiant on its right, spreading across on that side behind the tree, while its disc on the left is darkened. Although it is on Job's left it is still his spiritual life, and it has become more spiritual for being so. While the moon, symbolising Beulah or Innocence, has been carried from his left to his right side. Again the spiritual has been materialised, and the material has been spiritualised. The touch of earth and experience has purged the Spirit, of error, while earth itself has been made spiritual by Imagination.

We can now see the relation of this last design to the last but one. That represented the creation of the spiritual and eternal by the agency of Art. Round the central group of human figures is a hard, " wiry " outline, only just broken by Job's right foot, for, even in his palace of poetic vision, his spiritual nature still holds him to a world beyond himself. But in the glory of that world of vision, where he dwells with his rapt and lovely audience, he sees securely and with undisturbed soul the world of woes and of refining afflictions, and perhaps the sons of which the wrath of God has stripped him, lying in their vaults, for he sees even this as an episode in the great story of the Divine redemption of Man.

But in this final Illustration Job is in the midst of the material world. There is the oak, there are the hills, there are the flocks, and, most significantly, there is the dog, a symbol in several designs and margins but identically depicted in the second Illustration beneath the couch of Job's married son, whom we saw so grievously wrecked in the next design (Illus. 3). And yet it is here, on this mundane earth, that he finds again the sons he lost, knows them to be with himself lifting to heaven the harmonies of redemption,

though whether they too are in the flesh I cannot say—some perhaps not.

Blake was so intensely conscious of the presence with him of those he had loved and lost, and of their co-operation with him in artistic creation that, though he never conceived this presence to be in anything but imagination and memory,[1] he may well have pictured Job as finding his sons more livingly present in the outside world spiritually realised than in its visionary embodiment in art. Indeed I suppose his disciples to be nearest to Blake's mind when they conceive the final paradox of the Job to be that we reach the most inward and eternal phase of the innermost life not in the inner world of art but in the outer world of a great life shared with the living and the dead, with our sons and our sons' sons.

Job's wife is on the right, older but more beautiful for all she has endured. As symbolically shown, she still reigns over all that is corporeal in Man in complement to Job. Only twice throughout the book has her right foot appeared. Once when she supported her husband's feet after Satan had driven all light from his face,[2] and again when she detected Job's error of self-righteousness in the tenth Illustration. But she has nearly always been on Job's right side, for to him she has been a spirit.[3] "You have ever been an angel to me,"[4] said Blake to his own wife on his

[1] "I know that our deceased friends are more really with us than when they were apparent to our mortal part. Thirteen years ago I lost a brother, and with his spirit I converse daily and hourly in the spirit, and see him in my remembrance, in the regions of my imagination. I hear his advice, and even now write from his dictate." Letter to Hayley, Lambeth, 6th May 1800 (Russell, pp. 68, 69).

[2] Illus. 6.

[3] *Vide supra*, Illus. ii. p. 97. Also App. F on the "Creation of Eve," p. 227.

[4] So Gilchrist (vol. i. p. 404), except for the inversion of the third and fourth words, quoting perhaps (though inexactly) from Cunningham's "Life" (Symons, p. 429). So also Tatham in his account recorded in a footnote in J. T. Smith's

death-bed—but she was the kind of angel who through forty-five years of discouragement and difficulty, could keep the earthly home sweet and dignified[1] for a man "so little with her, though in the body they were never separated; for he was incessantly away in Paradise."[2]

"Memoir" (Symons, p. 379). But, curiously enough, Tatham's own version in his "Life" is more prosaic—"Kate, you have been a good wife" (Russell, p. 35). For a similar idea in Blake's own writings, however, *cp.* "J[m].," p. 14, ll. 13, 14:—

> "Enitharmon is a vegetated mortal Wife of Los.
> His Emanation, yet his Wife till the sleep of death is past."

[1] Gilchrist, i. ch. 34, esp. pp. 349 and 358.

[2] Swinburne, p. 89 note (Mr Seymour Kirkup's reminiscences), also quoted by Gilchrist (i. p. 410).

Blake's recognition of "the very world, which is the world of all of us," as "the place where, in the end, we find our happiness, or not at all!" (Wordsworth's Prelude, Bk. xi., ll. 142-4) is very touching and very noble. In the finale of the "Milton" it is closely associated with his wife;

> "A moment & my Soul returned into its mortal state,
> To Resurrection & Judgment in the Vegetable Body:
> And my sweet Shadow of Delight stood trembling by my side."
>
> ("M[n].," p. 44, ll. 26-8).

The "Jerusalem," which is purely a vision, nevertheless expresses a similar idea by turning from the beatification of Christ and Jerusalem (Illus. on p. 99) to the figure of Los on the last page of all (p. 100), standing tools in hand before the completed structure of his labours, which are not represented by the building of Jerusalem but of the city of Art, "Golgonooza" on the Earth.

But changing the terms, we have again the same idea expressed in the last verse of the great song we now call "Jerusalem" which Sir Hubert Parry's noble setting has almost made into a National Anthem:

> "I will not cease from Mental Fight,
> Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem,
> In Englands green & pleasant Land" ("M[n].," p. 2).

On his death-bed he threw aside his last finished efforts on the greatest of all his symbolic designs ("The Act of Creation" or "The Ancient of Days," *i.e.* the frontis-

In the position of Job's hands we have, perhaps, the clearest piece of symbolism to show the reversal of the sides. While his left hand is lifted to heaven (he has hitherto always worshipped with his right), his right hand plays the harp which, alone of all the instruments, stands upon the earth, but seems to soar to Heaven.

piece to " Europe ") to draw his wife's portrait sitting by his bed (ref. *supra*, note 4, p. 210) and the idea seems ever present in his greatest moments that the rapture of heavenly insight must be realised and justified in its reaction upon earth.

APPENDIX A

The explanation of the meaning of the right and left sides in Blake's pictures, and especially of the right and left feet, first occurred to me when considering his designs of "William" and "Robert" in the prophetic book "Milton." The very conspicuous position of William's left foot is emphasised by its being especially referred to in the text ("M^{n}.," p. 14, l. 49), and this made it seem the more significant that in the reversed design of "Robert" the same foot becomes the right instead of the left. "William" and "Robert" are, of course, Blake and his dead brother (conceived as dwelling in the spirit).[1] There seemed strong *prima facie* reasons, therefore, for believing that Blake pictured a correspondence between the right side of spiritual beings, or those in spiritual states; and the left of those still in the flesh, or in a corporeal state.

In the Job this symbolism is considerably elaborated and refined, and used of the two aspects of the same individual, and although I have not been able to discover definitely what he meant by it in every case (what for instance is the exact meaning of the feet of the sons and daughters in the last design. Probably they are in some way complementary to one another and to Job),[2] it is clear that the feet and hands practically always mean *something*, and generally something very clear and relevant to the subject as conceived by Blake.[3]

[1] "Thirteen years ago I lost a brother, and with his spirit I converse daily and hourly in the spirit, and see him in my remembrance, in the regions of my imagination." Letter to Wm. Hayley, 6th May 1800 (Russell, pp. 68, 69).

[2] The sons on Job's right are all right but one, the sons on his left, all left but one; the daughter on his right is left, the one in the centre both right and left, but the one on his left shows no foot. For a woman to show right foot only (which would make the design symmetrical is as we have seen something very grievous. Job's wife only does so in Illustration 6, *q.v.* especially note 2, p. 124.

[3] *Vide* Introduction, Section I., esp. pp. 47*f*.

How early in his life Blake worked out the system we find here I cannot say. In "Songs of Innocence," "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" and the "Songs of Experience," it seems to be definitely absent [1] (*e.g.*, Christ is left in heaven, "Little Black Boy," or is he possibly come to earth?) In "Urizen," "America" and "Europe," it seems to be used of the Zoas sometimes, Los being prevailingly left and Urizen right, though (perhaps for some reason) not consistently.[2] But when we come to the "Milton" it is used both of Los and Urizen (p. 15); of Ololon and probably Satan (p. 8), and of Milton, Blake and his brother. Milton is left as he descends to earth (p. 13); Los is left as he steps from his solar chariot (p. 21); Ololon (p. 36) is left as she descends into Blake's garden, Blake is always left himself (pp. 14, 19, 29, 36), and the central figure on the last page is left in the "stems of vegetation." On the other hand, Milton is right on the title-page and in his redemptive act on p. 41, and Robert is right (p. 33). In "Jerusalem," I can find nothing to definitely prove either its absence or presence.[3] In many of his paintings and drawings he seems to use it. To take a single example, in his "Christ in the house of

[1] A conclusion subsequently modified in Appendix G (*Note to Second Edition*).

[2] The well-known frontispiece to the "Europe," called "The Ancient of Days" or the "Act of Creation," appears to use the symbolism (and it is the more conspicuous because it shows the figure of Urizen, who is usually right, with left hand and foot advanced). Here the "Creator" rolls round the compasses which define existence, *with his left hand*, for (like the Deity in Illus. 15 of this series) he is creating the transitory world. It therefore seems to illustrate the passage in "Jerusalem":—

> ". . . I saw the finger of God go forth
> . . . . .
> Fixing their Systems, permanent: by mathematic power
> Giving a body to Falshood that it may be cast off for ever" ("Jm.," p. 12, ll. 10-13).

Cp. also another conception of Creation on p. 14 of "Urizen" where the left hand is used by another Zoa.

[3] As there are no earthly characters in the book (like Blake in the "Milton" or Job in the "Job"), the symbolism, if used at all, may be used with a somewhat different significance. I notice, however, that Jerusalem (like Job's wife) is always left, and Los prevailingly right, as is also Albion in regeneration. The key is perhaps to be found in the great crucifixion design frontispiece to chap. iv., where a correspondence and unison between Albion and Christ is attained in exactly the opposite way from that between Job and his Deity (Illus. 18). That is to say, Jerusalem is the story of God becoming Man, as Job is the story of Man becoming God —and as Los is the spiritual or universal man in his bodily aspect, so Job's story is of the spiritual aspect of an earthly man.

Martha and Mary" (called "But Martha was cumbered about much serving," Gilchrist, ii. p. 239), Christ shows right hand and foot only, Martha is left foot only (right hand less prominent), and Mary both ;[1] but with the right hand and right foot moved into an unnatural position, so as to be the more conspicuous. Blake's use of the right and left feet in the "Paradise Lost" designs (nearly contemporary with the "Job"), is clearly systematic, as may be seen by the table below (Appendix B).

There are not many references in the writings to the association of the left side with the earthly, and the right with the spiritual or imaginative. "Jerusalem" and the "Four Zoas" each have a reference to the left hand, which perhaps confirms but would certainly not establish the symbolism.

Left Hand. "So saying she took a Falshood & hid it in her left hand" ("Jm.," p. 82, l. 17). This falsehood was :

> "But if you on Earth Forgive,
> You shall not find where to Live" ("Jm.," p. 81, text in Illus. in reversed writing).

"Now my left hand I stretch abroad, even to Earth beneath." "F. Z." ("Vala," ii. l. 369).

All the other references are from the "Milton," and are as follows :—

Right Hand. "Daughters of Beulah ! Muses who inspire the Poets Song

> . . . . . .
> . . . Come into my hand
> By your mild power : descending down the Nerves of my right arm
> From out the Portals of my Brain, where by your ministry
> The Eternal Great Humanity Divine, planted his Paradise"
> ("Mn.," p. 3, ll. 1-8).

This passage seems as though it might have suggested the whole of this symbolism.

Left Foot. "Upon his fibrous left Foot black : most dismal to our eyes" (*Ibid.*, p. 20, l. 35).

"And all this Vegetable World appeard on my left Foot" (*Ibid.*, p. 19, l. 12).

[1] Note, again, woman's right very rarely alone (*cp.* note 2, pp. 124 *f.*, and *infra*, p. 217).

But the most interesting and important passage confirming the right and left symbolism, at first appears to confute it. It is as follows :—

> " The Souls descending to the Body, wail on the right hand
> Of Los : & those deliverd from the Body, on the left hand."

This is explained by the next line :—

" For Los against the east his force continually bends " (*Ibid.*, p. 26, ll. 16-18).

Now the East, as we know from a passage in " Jerusalem," is " Inwards " (" J^m.," p. 14, l. 31), and although even so the statement remains somewhat cryptic, it suggests that Los is pictured as standing with his back to the spectator and his face *inwards*, in which case his right and left would be the same as Job's in Illustration 18 (*vide supra* note 3, p. 214, and note 1, p. 195, Illus. xviii.), and *opposite* to the divine right and left, as shown in that and other Illustrations. In this case the above passage would be equivalent to the statement, " those descending to the body are on the left side of Christ, and those delivered on the right," which is, of course, the fact in all the " Last Judgment " pictures. Fortunately, there is an Illustration in the " Four Zoas " manuscript (the first of the " Vala " Illustrations reproduced by E. Y.) which puts the matter beyond doubt. Here we see Los (identified by having the sun on his head) standing with back to the spectator, while one figure descends on his right side, another sleeps by his right foot, a third wakes by his left foot and a fourth rises upon his left side, thus preserving the clockwise motion and establishing the fact that the right and left sides of Los are here the opposite of the Divine right and left, from which the symbolism is derived.

It is further interesting in this connection to note that Los is three times in " Jerusalem " (pp. 1, 62 [1] and 73) represented with back to the spectator, and also elsewhere in the prophetic books (notably title-page " Bk. of Los "), whereas I can find only one clear case of any of the other Zoas being so represented (" Urizen," p. 25). On the other hand, it seems highly significant that at the end of " Jerusalem " the regenerate *Albion* is

[1] Where a diminutive "Los" looks *inwards*, gazing at a Titanic figure of the "natural" sun, looking *outwards*, in agony, and wreathed in the Serpent's folds (the Serpent symbolises Nature, *vide supra*, note 5, p. 146, etc.).

thrice (pp. 76, 95 and 97) represented with back to the spectator. That is to say, when the Zoas became re-united in him, it is Los's inward attitude that has at last prevailed, securing the unison of the corporeal and divine referred to in Illustration 18, and probably in the great design on p. 76 of "Jerusalem" (*vide supra*, note 3, p. 214, present Appendix).[1]

The above Appendix is left as written, but as will be seen in Appendix G I now regard the view that the symbolism does not exist in the early works as having been premature. (Note to Second Edition.)

NOTE ON BLAKE'S MAGDALEN

(*Vide supra, note 2, p. 124*)

This remarkable design is, I think, complementary to Job, Illus. 18. Both describe the moment of Divine Forgiveness. There Man becomes one with Deity in an act of selfless humility, and here Woman becomes one with the Divine Humanity in an equally humble and spiritual act. The clue is in the symbolism of the hands. The Magdalen's left hand is advanced and touches Earth. It is therefore in front of her exposed right foot and doubtless complements it (*cp. supra*, pp. 18 *ff.*). In her right hand she holds the right foot of Christ, which should be contrasted with Job's left-handed (and therefore corporeal) gift into the beggar's left hand (Illus. 5). The Magdalen's love, though expressed in the body, is a gift in the purity of spiritual humility. But as Job's right foot in Illus. 5 betrays a "False Holiness hid within the Center" which flows down into his wife's life and is betrayed in her symbolical attitude in Illus. 6, so a true Divinity flows down from Christ into the ultimate being of the Magdalen, and consequently *her* right (complemented by the left hand) symbolises a true regeneration—like Christ's own or Job's in Illus. 20 and 21. This, at least, is what I take to be Blake's meaning. The unnatural position of Christ's feet combined with the very unusual position of the Magdalen's makes some explanation necessary.

[1] *Cp.* also "M[n].," p. 40, ll. 32-34:

> "Albion . . . his face is toward
> The east, towards Jerusalems Gates."

APPENDIX B

I APPEND a table which may help the reader in the designs to Milton's "Paradise Lost."

God the Father (only seen in heaven), God the Son, and Raphael and Michael (only seen on earth) are right in heaven and left on earth. God the Son is also "left" when he drives out of heaven in his chariot ("Paradise Lost," bk. vi. l. 750, top of p. 199 in Liverpool Booksellers' Edition) against the rebel host.[1]

Eve always shows both feet, but the left is more advanced, except where she sleeps under the cross, and here she is an "inward" vision rather than a "vegetated" woman, as indicated by her being separated off from the rest of the scene in her symbolic bower (*vide infra*, Appendix F).

Adam also always shows both feet, but has the right more advanced until Eve yields to temptation, after which he remains left until the vision of the Crucifixion.

Satan is always right in the presence of man or devils, but left in the presence of God the Son.

[1] In the Illustration of Christ judging Adam and Eve, neither foot is uncovered, though the right leg is more advanced. This is clearly because it would be unsuitable to represent him as "left" when giving a spiritual judgment, and yet he cannot be represented "right" when upon earth.

APPENDIX C

Symbolism of the Diurnal Motion

Considering the important place it took in his thoughts, there are comparatively few passages in Blake's works which conclusively show that he regarded the diurnal motion as symbolical. The passage quoted above from the poem on p. 77 of "Jerusalem" stands almost alone,[1] but this, if read carefully, is sufficient. Its gist is that Natural Religion is a counter-clockwise view of life leading to Pharisaism. Against this Jesus strives and thereby creates a new and higher (clockwise) "Nature" out of this, "by self-denial and forgiveness of sin." The designs also afford much interesting evidence on the matter. First a small design on p. 72 of "Jerusalem," in which this world is represented by a rocky disc or sphere, wept over by angels right and left, has a legend running *clockwise* round it as follows: "Continually Building, Continually Decaying because of Love & Jealousy." With this should be compared a similar design on p. 54, where the clockwise motion is shown by the small figures right and left of the disc. These are merely confirmations. More important and interesting is the fact that the myth both in "Jerusalem" and the "Four Zoas" is connected with the diurnal motion, as Messrs Ellis and Yeats have shown. In the "Four Zoas," this is very clear, as it expressly begins with sunset ("F. Z." *cp.* "Vala," i. l. 20), and concludes with dawn ("F. Z." *cp.* "Vala," ix. l. 647; *cp. Ibid.*, ll. 391 *ff.*). Also the first symbolical design, reproduced in "Vala" E. Y., iii., represents the sun in the centre and figures right and left, clearly showing the clockwise motion (*cp.* Appendix A, *vide supra*, p. 216).

In "Jerusalem," also sunset and dawn begin and end the drama as indicated in three different ways. In the text the sunset does not actually

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 87 and note 4.

occur till the beginning of chap. ii. (p. 29, ll. 1-2), but chap. i. may almost be regarded as a kind of prelude to the whole, in which the stories of Los and his sons and daughters, and of their labours for Jerusalem, prepare the way for the story of Albion proper. At the end of the poem the dawn is finely described as the rising of Albion ("Jm.," p. 95, ll. 5-15).

> "The Breath Divine went forth over the morning hills Albion rose
> In anger; the wrath of God breaking bright, flaming on all sides around
> His awful limbs; into the Heavens he walked clothed in flames
> Loud thundring, with broad flashes of flaming lightning & pillars
> Of fire, speaking the Words of Eternity in Human Forms, in direful
> Revolutions of Action & Passion, thro the Four Elements on all sides
> Surrounding his awful Members. Thou seest the Sun in heavy clouds
> Struggling to rise above the Mountains, in his burning hand
> He takes his Bow, then chooses out his arrows of flaming gold
> Murmuring the Bowstring breathes with ardor! clouds roll round the
> Horns of the wide Bow, loud sounding winds sport on the mountain brows."

and later ("Jm.," p. 97, ll. 1-4):—

> "Awake Awake Jerusalem! O lovely Emanation of Albion
> Awake and overspread all Nations as in Ancient Time
> For lo! the Night of Death is past, and the Eternal Day
> Appears upon our Hills: Awake Jerusalem, and come away."

In the Illustrations there is also conclusive evidence that the course of the drama follows the apparent solar cycle. It is probable that the Illustration on p. 6, of Los and his spectre, is representative of sunset.[1] Not only the strange beams or rays from the furnace, but, more significant, the iron chain descending on Los's left are suggestive of this—what is certain is that a sunrise is shown in the heading of the final chapter (chap. iv., "Jm.," p. 78) where the form of a man with a cock's head clearly symbolises "the bird of dawning," showing that the half-hidden sun he is watching is rising, not setting. Lastly, the first and last pages of the work (1 and 100) are respectively of Los carrying a sun into the caverns of the underworld, and of his finally liberating one from night and the "Serpent temple," to be carried upwards by a figure on his right.

[1] If Los is here fronting "East" (*vide supra* p. 216), his back being to the "West" gives an additional reason for regarding the flame at his back as symbolical of sunset.

APPENDIX D

THE *Satanic (or more frequently the "Starry") Wheels* [1] is Blake's name for those systems of thought which conceive the Universe upon a rationalistic basis—and with these he associates such Religious or Moral codes as base Society on penalties for wrong-doing. For the one attempts to make all think uniformly by coercive logic, the other to make all act uniformly by coercive law. In this way he conceives that all which is of supreme value, to wit spontaneous thought and action, is wounded and crushed ("Jm.," p. 15, ll. 14-20).

> "I turn my eyes to the Schools & Universities of Europe
> And there behold the Loom of Locke whose Woof rages dire
> Washd by the Water-wheels of Newton, black the cloth
> In heavy wreathes folds over every Nation: cruel Works
> Of many Wheels I view, wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic
> Moving by compulsion each other: not as those in Eden: which
> Wheel within Wheel in freedom revolve in harmony & peace."

The freedom of the "Wheels" of Eden is connected with his doctrine of the Essence and Identities (*vide* Illus. xvii. and Appendix E). Identities are all free and independent, being united only in Essence. They are never identically one, but may become essentially one in love. If we were each mere wheels or externally connected fragments of a single identity, "Heaven would upon this plan be but a Clock" [2]—the absence or imperfection of any one part would destroy the Whole. But being one in essence, the essence may be perfect in each individual and is not to be lost so long as it is preserved in any one, while it may yet be repeated without limit, in innumerable men and things.

On p. 22 of "Jerusalem" is a design in which we see three gigantic

[1] "Jm.," p. 5, l. 4, etc., etc., etc.

[2] "Swed.," p. 24.

cog-wheels setting behind a boundless sea into an abyss of flame. Above these and repeating their undulations is a chain of angels. Over each wheel a pair [1] of angels makes an arch with joined hands, and each pair is linked to the next with feet and wings. This design appears to symbolise the two ways of conceiving the nexus of the universe or of weaving its facts into a whole; as expressed by the text above.

> "Why should Punishment Weave the Veil with Iron Wheels of War
> When Forgiveness might it Weave with Wings of Cherubim." [2]

[1] Only one pair can be fully seen.
[2] *Cp.* also design of "Jm.," p. 75, *cp. supra* note 5, p. 170.

APPENDIX E

Blake's Pluralism

(*Additional Note to Illustration* 17)

As readers interested in these questions will have noticed, Blake's alternating vision of contraction and expansion, is a method of basing a religious or emotional Monism, on a genuine philosophic Pluralism.

For Blake himself, the scheme is associated with his conceptions of Christ and Christianity, and with certain characteristic ideas about "forgiveness" and "imagination." But the subject is so interesting that I will ask leave to give a free rendering of the scheme as it appears to emerge when divested of its poetic and symbolic setting.

In Nature, Blake finds nothing which we ought to dignify by the name of Unity—though the material scientist finds a kind of blind necessity which he mistakes for unity.[1] To worship this is the error of the Deist[2]—not to say the Atheist. We need not necessarily assert, indeed, that Blake rejects outward nature *ontologically*, as is often urged, and as many of his utterances certainly suggest.[3] What is indisputable is that he rejects external nature as the seat of Deity;—except perhaps in the last resort, and then because the Divine light is inextinguishable

[1] "Jm.," p. 15, ll. 14-20 (quoted *supra* p. 221), etc. [2] "Jm.," p. 52, etc.

[3] "H. C. R. Diary" (Symons, p. 259): "Every thing is *Atheism* which assumes the reality of the Natural & Unspiritual world." Also (Symons, p. 263): "He denied that the natural world is any thing. It is all nothing and Satan's empire is the empire of nothing"; and (Symons, p. 265): "Nature is the work of the Devil." On the other hand, such sayings as "The Devil is in us, as far as we are Nature" (*ib.*), prove that Nature did *actually* exist for Blake and had some part in us. Moreover, the appearance of the "Non Ens" itself, "seen in regeneration terrific or complacent varying according to the subject of discourse" in the finale of Jerusalem ("Jm.," p. 98, ll. 33-35), would be gratuitous (not to say impossible) if "nonentity" was for Blake the same as being actually "not there." I cannot resist the conviction that Blake's repudiation of Nature is moral and not strictly ontological—though how far he himself would have admitted this is another question.

even in the deepest abyss. To him Nature is at best a "fortuitous concourse of incoherent, discordant principles of Love & Hate."[1] He is therefore driven to seek his unifying principle in Man. But Man must be no mere abstract idea. It must be in real men that we find our unity or not at all[2]—and here the real difficulty occurs, for the more we are in touch with actual living men, the more obstinately do they appear to be distinct and plural. We may picture Blake himself, for instance, delightfully certain that *his* identity was not a thing to be merged in any other man's, human or divine. And consistency led him to insist on the same liberty of identity for others. For the moment then, his resort to Man seems to have removed his Unity further than ever. And it is in his method of overcoming this difficulty that he shows his admirable sanity of mind. His escape is found not in denying the facts of plurality, which he continually re-asserts, but in spiritualising the conception of Unity. After all, the unity of contact and inclusion is not the highest, and when we cease to look to the material world for our unity, we must rise above mechanical and material conceptions of unity.[3]

Tangibly then, and even conceptually, we must admit men to be necessarily and for ever individual and plural. Yet there does exist, as the greatest men have always felt, a profound, albeit purely spiritual, unity, amongst us all, and it is through this that the ultimate unity of the universe itself must be found. This unity is not to be discovered by comparing, relating and generalising a number of human beings and so losing their distinctive individualities.[4] All such intellectualisations of Man as an objective phenomenon are futile. What we must do is to go inwards and examine the ultimate essence of our own conscious existence. We then learn that the essence as it dwells in ourselves is active consciousness (Imagination) and desire (which must be chastened into the higher "love") —this is what *we* are, and yet it is by applying this most immediate

[1] "F. Z.," *cp.* "Vala," ii. ll. 102, 3.
[2] "Jm.," p. 91, etc.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 91, ll. 26-28; *cp.* "Swed.," p. 24, etc.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 91, ll. 26-28:—

> "You accumulate Particulars, & murder by analyzing, that you
> May take the aggregate . . . . . .
> And you call that Swelld & bloated Form a Minute Particular."

and inward of all conceptions to other individuals, that we most nearly bridge the gulf that separates us from them. The innermost humanity, which makes each man an inviolable identity, *is* the supreme fact common to every human life. This is what Blake calls "God," the "intellectual" (as opposed to the external or materialistic) "fountain of Humanity." [1] It exists nowhere but in individual men—yet, wherever it exists, it is *the* supreme fact and essentially the *same* fact. It is doubly unifying—firstly because it is the same (essentially the same, not identically) [2] in every man; and secondly, because in its supreme phase of love it breaks down the conflicting interests which our inalienable external plurality admits and even fosters.

It is from the vantage-ground of this conception of the universal human essence that we must re-interpret and re-unify Nature itself. Every creature and even every atom has its own loves and hates, which we must interpret by ours—and though the result is sometimes painful and even horrifying to the imagination (as exemplified as early as the "Book of Thel") it is the only way to find God in the outward order.

In proposing the above as the most workable anatomy of Blake's system, I do not suggest that he had thought it out all precisely in the form here put. Neither do I for a moment suggest that it is something quite peculiar to Blake. Least of all do I propose it as an entirely practical system or ideal. I confess, however, that it does appear to me to have real value as suggesting a *mode* of unity which, without outraging the perpetual consciousness of actual plurality to which the mind is subject, yet helps to assuage the human demand for some form of Monism, while showing a very sane appreciation of the true direction in which we must seek the realisation of human unity.

Moreover, if not explicit, it is, I believe, implicit in all Blake's highest flights of thought, and until we have grasped it, we miss the innerness of almost all his best. The matter may be concluded here by a characteristic example, which shows very clearly his anxiety to preserve in every

[1] "Jm.," p. 91, l. 10.

[2] *Cp.* "A. R. O." (Sampson, 1913): "As all men are alike in outward form So (*and with the same infinite variety*) all are alike in the Poetic Genius." (Italics mine.)

conception both his spiritual Monism and his intellectual Pluralism. In the great passage quoted on the Dedication-page of this book, he says :

> " When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter
> Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)." [1]

Bosom is here intentionally put in the singular and universes in the plural, to counteract the natural tendency of the mind to conceive two men's bosoms as necessarily plural, and the universe common to both as necessarily singular. Blake holds that the contrary is equally true. All depends on the mode of vision. If the vision is according to identities, not only has each man his own bosom, but each bosom is (or has) its own independent universe ; whereas, seen according to essence, all true universes are in *the* human bosom ; which is always essentially the same, whether in you or me or any man. And this is what Blake calls " the Bosom of God, the Human Imagination." [2]

[1] "Jm.," p. 88, ll. 3, 4.

[2] "Jm.," p. 5, l. 20.

APPENDIX F

The Creation of Eve

The subject of the place of woman in Blake's scheme is extremely interesting though somewhat complex. It is rendered the more difficult from the fact that as in other cases his changes of sentiment obscure the real consistency of his basal ideas.

For Blake, "Humanity" included both the male and the female elements, either of which was incomplete without the other.[1] But when, as in this world, the two are separated the male appears to be always regarded as representing the human type, though imperfectly. This leads to one of Blake's curious complexities of thought. The female is regarded either (*a*) as the ever-present token of man's lapse from Man—and of the fact that the earthly man is not the true and perfect Humanity (which, of course, the earthly woman is still less); or (*b*) as the vehicle in which is preserved, and from which shall ultimately proceed, the beauty and goodness which the earthly man lacks to make him perfect Man (or God).[2]

Woman, therefore, in herself everything piteous, and weak,[3] brings in complement to the corporeal male all earthly light and salvation.[4] She represents on the one hand the symbol and genius of the earthly life, and on the other hand the uplifting spirit who, like the "little Clod of Clay" ("S. E.") "builds a Heaven in Hell's despair."

We may without, I think, overstraining the theory of the completely symbolical character of Blake's later designs, read the expression of these

[1] "Jm.," p. 90, ll. 1, 2.

[2] The contrast between the isolated male and the male united with the female in Beulah is finely drawn in "Jm.," p. 69, ll. 1-31. Beulah, however, is here shown as an unstable condition.

[3] Urizen, pp. 16, 17, etc., etc.

[4] *Cp.* "Jm.," p 54, ll. 27-32, and next page, ll. 1, 2.

ideas in the two illustrations to "Paradise Lost" entitled the "Creation of Eve" and the "Vision of the Crucifixion."

The problem of this former design is to explain why Eve is created by the second and not the first person of the Trinity. The answer is, I suggest, as follows. Adam, who is fallen in death-like slumber, upon a great leaf symbolising the earthly or "Vegetative" life, has thereby destroyed the perfect image of the divine life in himself. This calls down the Eternal and Universal Humanity (always symbolised by Christ) to restore the loss; for it is impossible for man's Divinity to suffer eternal diminution. This restoration is achieved by evoking the human complement of the earthly (*i.e.* sleeping) male, in the female,[1] who is therefore in a sense the divinest part of man. And here Eve, as shown by the feet, is complementary to Adam. (The symbolism of Adam's and of Christ's feet has been suggested *supra* in Appendix B.)

In the prophetic Vision of the Crucifixion, we see the final and perfect redemption of the earthly Man achieved, by the death of Deity on the cross,[2] symbolising, one may suppose, the spiritualising of the vegetable (corporeal) life in its most acutely limited form. The cosmic tragedy—which from one point of view is a mere mutual annihilation of the supreme Divinity and the supreme Death—has, incidentally as it were, resulted in the creation of a form of ideal beauty, such as was alone capable of redeeming Earth from utter darkness, during the period of waiting for deliverance. But Eve, now no longer needed in the flesh—for man's complete nature has been restored and she is comprehended in Adam's being—remains as a pure vision, a potentiality of joy and beauty now realised by the perfect Humanity as eternally within itself, and seen as the inevitable outcome of the Crucifixion tragedy. And here Eve—detached from the actual scene, as a vision or emblem in her symbolic bower—is represented (by the feet) as complementary to, no longer the sleeping Adam, but, the slain Christ.

[1] *Cp.* "Jm.," p. 42, ll. 32-34.

> "But when Man sleeps in Beulah the Saviour in mercy takes
> Contractions Limit, and of the Limit he forms Woman: That
> Himself may in process of time be born Man to redeem."

[2] "Jesus replied, Fear not Albion: unless I die thou canst not live," "Jm.," p. 96, l. 14; *cp.* "Jm.," p. 90, l. 38; p. 62, ll. 18-20; p. 35, ll. 9, 10, etc.

APPENDIX G

(Extract from Article in the "Quest," April 1912, by J. H. W.)

It is in the symbolism of the designs of "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" that we are now to look for an aid to interpretation that has hitherto escaped the vigilance of interpreters, and we shall discover that it is in the illustrations that Blake keeps most closely to his true theme of a mutual interdependence between the so-called "bodily" and "spiritual." In the text he is, as has been said, always over-shooting the mark. He finds it impossible to recommend one without at the same time depreciating the other, so that he has no sooner shown Hell as worthy of Heaven than he shows Heaven as utterly unworthy of Hell. In fact Reason is already becoming evil for Blake, though in the illustrations we shall find it still represented, in contradistinction to (bodily) Energy, as spiritual.

The first four plates represent visions of Heaven and Hell, presented by male or female figures according to the metaphor employed. In every case it is possible to identify Heaven by the thrusting forwards of the right leg, Hell by a similar posing of the left one,[1] and generally by confirmatory indications.

It is in the third and fourth plates that we begin to find the interpretive value of this system. The first words in the text of p. 3 are: "As a new heaven is begun, and it is now thirty-three years" [probably Blake's age at

[1] When the back is turned this latter symbolical attitude may be indicated principally by a thrusting back of the *right* leg, or in the "Job" the *foot* rather than the *leg* (*e.g.* Ill. 18). For Blake's less exuberant use of nude limbs in his later works, as the "Milton," "Job," and "Dante" designs, leads to his using *feet* instead of *legs* as the expressive portion of the figure, with the result that we sometimes have to read the designs in a slightly different sense, according to their date, *e.g. cp.* the attitude of Hell ("Marriage." p. 2), with that of Satan in the "Job," plate 3, although curiously enough in this particular instance Hell is draped and Satan is nude.

the time of writing] "since its advent; the Eternal Hell revives." The illustration at the head of the page shows the figure of a nude woman bathing in flames, spreading out her arms and about to rise. Her outstretched left leg identifies her as bodily energy, in other words as the "Eternal Hell" *reviving*. Below is another nude, in outstretched agony, and in the very act of giving birth to a child. Again the symbolism of the limbs identifies her as Heaven, that is to say, the *ancient* Heaven giving birth to the "new Heaven." The sex is now changed (*cp.* Man in the Resurrection changes his Sexual Garments at Will),[1] and we see a lyrical flight of a youth (shown symbolically as Hell) with a maiden (shown as Heaven), out from the foot of the page. With the impersonations thus identified the thought is not very far to seek, and proves worth the search. With the birth of every child (Blake himself for instance) a new Heaven, that is a new series of natural (and conventional) limitations, is born of the old ones. His limited individuality (or rational consciousness) now becomes the screen upon which the Universe's Eternal Energy, reviving afresh, projects itself; the bounds which contain and define it, the banks to life's stream. Every life therefore is conceived as a new opportunity or framework (Heaven) for an original outburst and manifestation of the splendours of the universe's exuberant and perennial vitality (Hell). Whereupon we see the new-born soul wedded in virginal joy to life's eternal youth, and swept along by him into the swift race of existence.

We must now turn to the last of these four designs. Here the figures are all male. A waste of sea breaks forth in flames upon the right; a rising sun glows clear above the horizon on the left. From the flames a rushing figure throws a babe across the deep, to be caught in the arms of a figure advancing along the sunlight path across the sea. The flames would seem at first sight to identify the right-hand figure with Hell. But this seems improbable, as the symbolism shows him with his right leg advanced, and the sun-proceeding one with the left.[2] And fortunately Blake has left us in

[1] "Jm.," p. 61, l. 51, etc.

[2] This fact seemed so contradictory as to cause me for some time to abandon the theory of there being any consistent use of a right and left symbolism in Blake's early designs. But further consideration eventually showed its interpretive value here as elsewhere.

no doubt. By putting a manacle upon the leg of the son of flame, he clearly identifies him as the limiting power of law or reason (Heaven). This makes the interpretation simple. The design shows once more the old condemned and manacled Heaven sending forth its child, the New Heaven, across the waters (the child throws forward its right leg) to be caught and rescued by the Eternal Energy reviving from the deep with the rising sun.

This method of interpretation helps to explain several of the other designs in this weird book, where genii and giants are shown as merely spiritual beings, that is, unendowed with the divine and eternal vitality of bodily and concrete existence; mere visions of the limiting earth-bound mind. "Thus men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast." [1] It also probably explains why the symbolical figure of Innocence in the frontispiece to the "Songs" is made left, and the corresponding figure of Experience right. Experience is the curbing, legal and in a sense earthly, factor of life, called Heaven by the priests and teachers of Christendom; but it is the body's spontaneity and innocence, with all its joys and instincts, that is according to Blake, at this stage of his thought, the really eternal and divine power of life, though spoken of as Hell.[2]

But before leaving "The Marriage" let us turn once more to this fourth illustration and compare it with a remarkable colour print executed probably some five years later. The reader who has followed the above account of Blake's attempt in "The Marriage" to make a harmony between the so-called Good and Evil or Spiritual and Bodily factors of life, will have divined the radical instability of his synthesis. The tendency already so obvious in the text to make what he calls Heaven the evil power, becomes more and more complete in Blake's work of the next few years, until at last Reason is made responsible for everything that is blind and cruel and self-sufficient; it becomes, in fact (as has been explained), the antithesis of Imagination

[1] "The Marriage," p. 11. Later Blake regards the spiritual as the only real, but that is when Reason has come to typify materialism, and the spiritual is represented not by reason but by imagination. Even in "The Marriage," where the body is certainly the primal reality (p. 4), he arrives at much the same point by declaring that it *is* the soul though but a portion of it (*ib.*).

[2] It is always dangerous to interpret earlier work by later, and in some ways Blake clearly intends Experience to represent a higher view.

instead of being contrasted with mere physical impulse as it was in "The Marriage," and as such it is frankly the type of the material and earthly. The colour print we are now to consider belongs to the period when this change may be regarded as confirmed. Again we see a flame-emerging and a sun-begotten spirit meeting over a waste of sea; again the former is identified as restraint or Reason by its manacled foot, and again the sun-spirit clasps a rescued babe. But now Blake spares no pains to represent the fiery spirit as wholly hideous and hateful, in which point it differs completely from the version in "The Marriage." In one version of the print the eyes of the Evil Angel (as it is now called) are replaced by white and sightless orbs, which give it a particularly horrible aspect.[1] And surely it is not a little interesting that the design is reversed, making the manacled figure now left or corporeal, and the other, which we may now perhaps call Imagination, right or spiritual. At all events, if the reversal is an accident, it is the kind of accident which must not happen too often.[2]

[1] Gilchrist, ii. (List No. 1, 22), p. 209.

[2] This change of Blake's system is connected with his mythological characters, Urizen, Orc and Los, who symbolically may be said to cover the ideas of Reason, Energy and Imagination respectively, though the last especially is far too complex a character to be adequately described by a single word. It is the change from Heaven to Urizen as the symbol for Reason that marks the change in Blake's attitude. In "The Marriage," Reason still has its legitimate, necessary and even, in a sense, spiritual function. But Urizen is always a fallen spirit only to be ultimately redeemed by unspeakable cosmic travail, the theme of the prophetic books. Yet even Urizen is still symbolised in "The America," three years after "The Marriage," as *right* (p. 8), though next year (1794) in the great frontispiece to "The Europe" he appears *left*. What is more interesting and important is the symbolism in the "Book of Urizen" of that year (1794). He is seen on the title-page with his right foot crossed over so as to appear under his left knee, while he has a pen in each hand with which he writes in opposite directions, and after this he is once represented "right," *i.e.* during his fall on page 11. Once before (p. 8) he is, as it were, equivocally "right," that is he would be "right" if the symbolic value were not neutralised by the advanced foot being significantly covered by the beard. He then becomes left on pp. 17, 20 (hands especially), 21, 25 and 26. This last page is the end of the book, and the design is particularly interesting as it shows him in a similar attitude to that on the title-page, but the uncovered foot beneath his left knee is no longer right but left, as though the transmutation had been completed.

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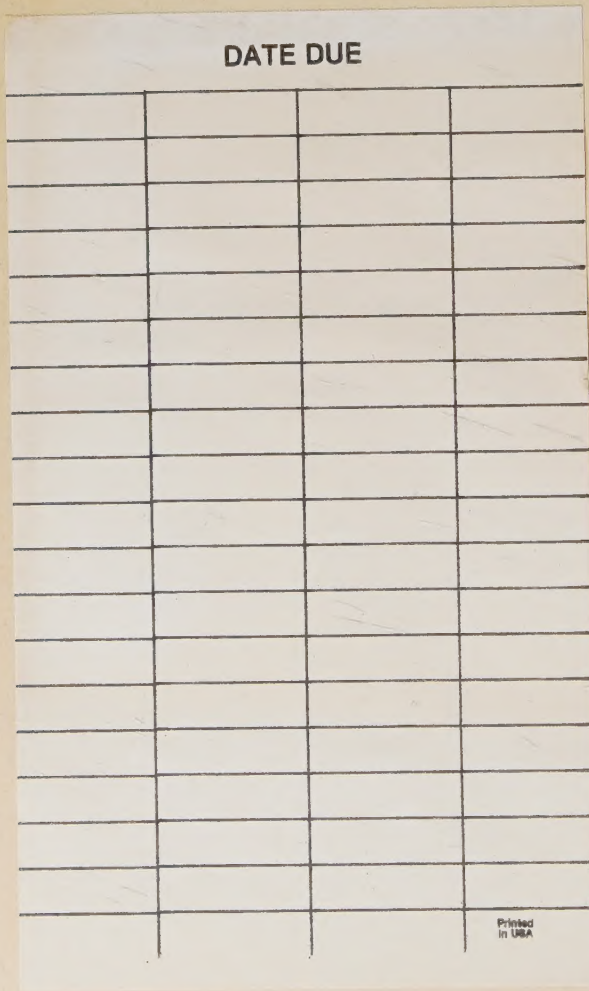

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